Commentary

Volume Fifty, Number Five, November 1970

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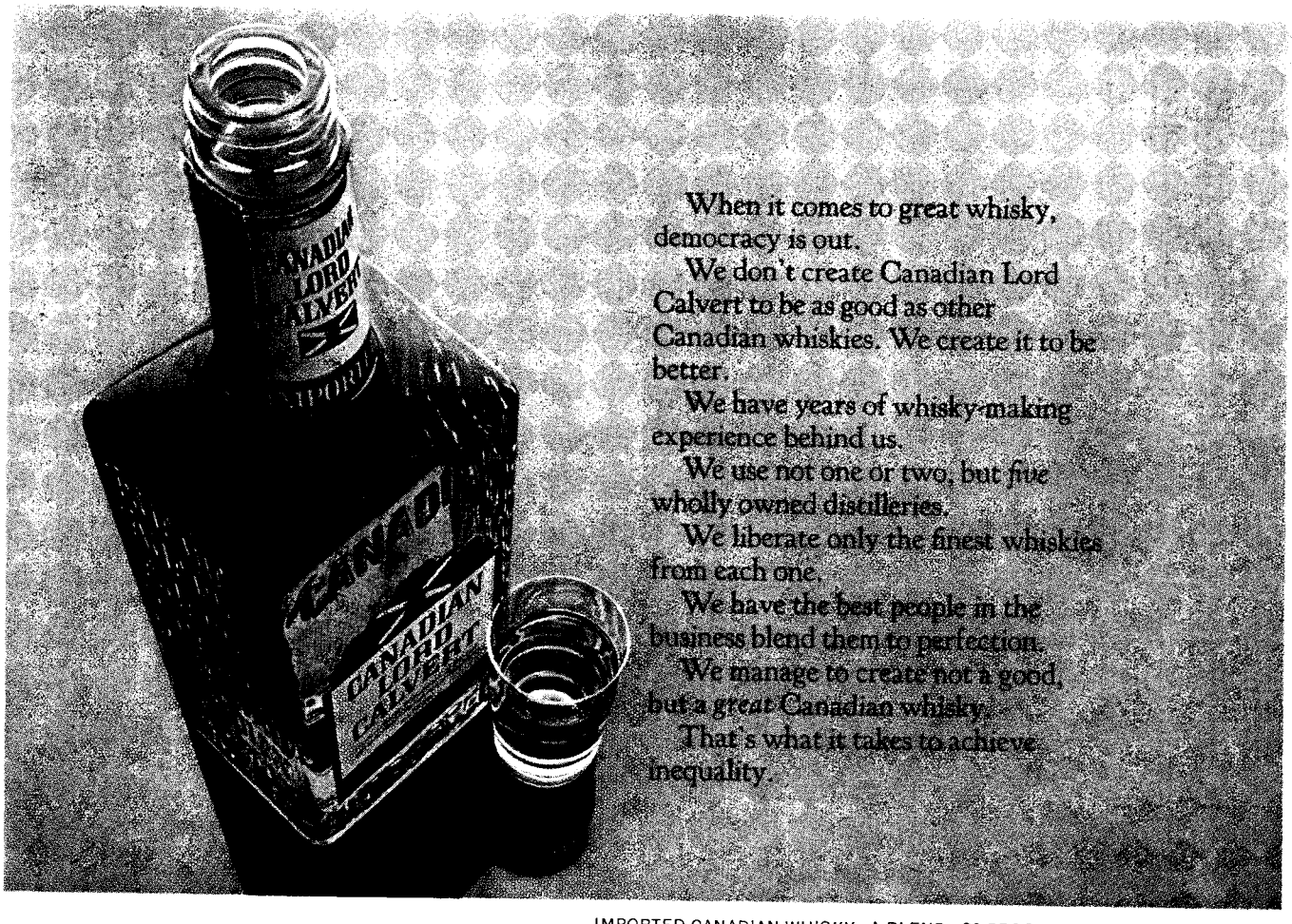

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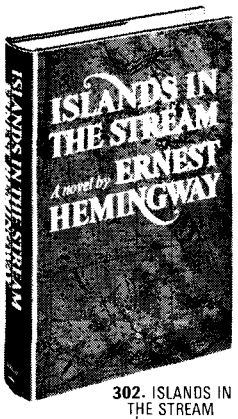

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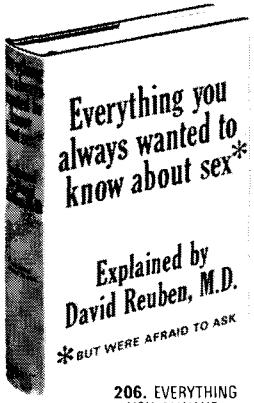

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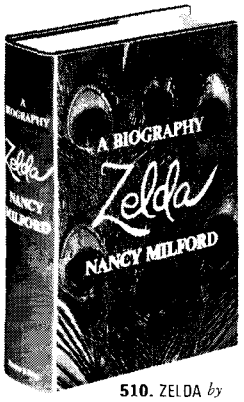

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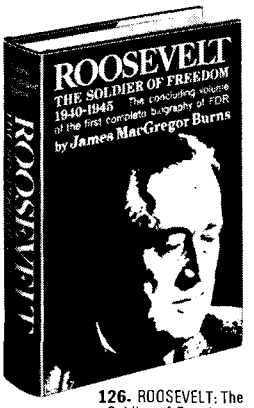
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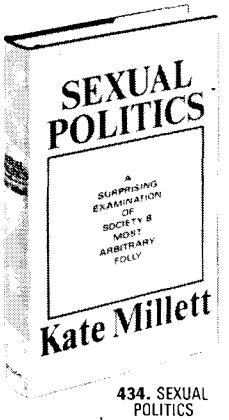

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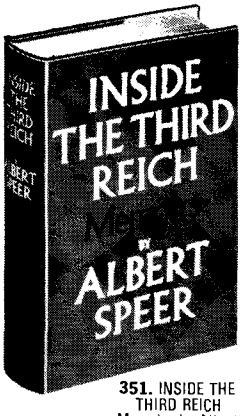

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Commentary

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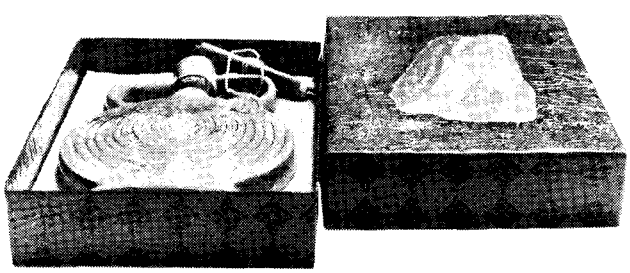

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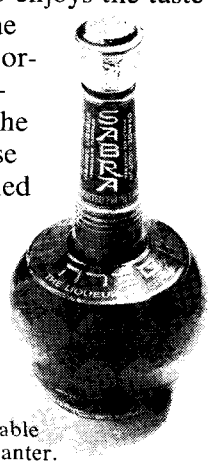

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The Idea of Crisis

Norman Podhoretz

As between Jerome Zukosky (p. 40), who argues that the urban crisis is largely an "insubstantial construct," and Irving Kristol (p. 44), who considers the crisis real but rooted far more deeply in the ideas so many of us carry around in our heads rather than the conditions under which most of us, white *and* black, now live in the cities of America, I myself on the whole tend to agree with Mr. Kristol, and especially with his emphasis on the role played in the creation of this crisis by the widespread dissemination of attitudes which used to be the lovingly nurtured patrimony of an intellectual elite and their concomitant debasement and vulgarization into the staples of a mass culture (or "counter-culture," as its loyalists, in their characteristically pretentious style, like to call it) more complacent, more arrogant, and if not actually more philistine then at least more insidiously so than any the world has ever seen before. To the various *trahisons* of the *New York Review* against the defining values of the intellectual life which Dennis Wrong (p. 49) discusses, I would wish to add the central responsibility that periodical shares for the speed and efficiency with which this process of vulgarization has managed to consolidate itself during the past five years or so.

Now of the many ideas which have thus been cheapened through promiscuous cohabitation with every passing mind, the idea that we are experiencing a major historical crisis is quite possibly the most beaten and bedraggled of all. In this sense Mr. Zukosky, I think, is right in calling for skepticism as the most sensible response to the "crisis-mongering" which—as he is also right in seeing—has become the conventional wisdom of those who write editorials and those who take the "extremely rarefied translation of reality" produced by the newspapers and television for reality itself. Where Mr. Zukosky goes wrong, in my opinion, is in his notion that the idea of crisis comes from a mistaken or an intellectually parochial view of the world which can be corrected by exposure to the evidence. The truth is that this idea has never had much to do with the kind of evidence Mr. Zukosky is talking about. It is not an empirical observation, though it is by no means averse to posing as one when an opportune occasion arises; it is, rather, a political idea, and one whose potency depends in part on its not being recognized as such.

Not recognized, because a frank avowal of the purpose served by the idea would repel a great many people who, in all innocence and with the best will in the world, accept it at face value, and even many who not only accept but propagate it and would be horrified to discover—or in some cases merely to admit to themselves—its true political nature. This purpose, to describe it plainly, is the effort to destroy the democratic pluralism of the American polity and to replace it with some other form of government. How does the idea of crisis serve that purpose? By the judgment it pronounces on the capacity of the "system" to cope with the problems that confront it. The fact that serious problems exist, including even problems which are not social at all and would persist under any conceivable set of political arrangements, is assumed to be sufficient testimony to such incapacity. Sometimes the "system" is said to "antiquated"; sometimes it is said to be remote and "unresponsive"; sometimes it is said to be rotten or corrupt. Often, with an effrontery which only fails to take the whole country's breath away because the general degradation of the democratic idea of which Mr. Kristol speaks has dulled our collective political sensibilities, the oldest and still one of the very few democratic polities on earth—namely, the one that maintains a complex living existence in the United States of America—is even said to be undemocratic. Not long ago, for example, Robert Paul Wolff, who teaches philosophy of all things, declared that anyone who still believes that the United States is a bastion of democracy belongs in a mental hospital;* about a year after delivering himself of this authentically philosophical judgment, Professor Wolff could be found declaring his opposition to terrorism as a mode of social protest.† He did not explain on what ground of principle anyone who shared his view of the United States should refrain from acts of terrorism in order to bring it down. Or are we to suppose that his brave opposition to trashing and bombing constitutes a symptom of an unfortunate mental breakdown of his own? If so, it were better for us all that he not enjoy any too speedy a recovery.

To harp on the idea of crisis is in effect to declare a state of emergency in which extraordinary measures become necessary; at that point the enemies of democracy converge from all sides offering solutions unavailable to the antiquated or rotten or unresponsive system. It may be that they offer a species of Gaullism; it may be that they offer a species of totalitarian Communism; it may be that they offer a species of fascism; and it may be that they offer a species of nothingness out of the nihilism of their bitter souls. To be sure, none of these solutions presents itself by its proper name. Except for an occasional writer like Edgar Z. Friedenberg, the enemies of democracy are rarely frank in the profession of their true political beliefs; often, indeed, they seem unaware of the anti-democratic implication of the things they like to say. Conscious or not, however, the hatred of democracy, especially in the pluralistic form democracy takes in America, is well served by the idea of crisis whose prevalence is itself a major cause of the reality it purports to describe but which in fact it does not so much describe as help to call into being.

* The New York *Times Book Review*, September 7, 1969.

† See his letter to the New York *Times*, September 13, 1970.

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Letters from Readers

The Rosenbergs

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The two main points of Allen Weinstein's article ["Agit-Prop & the Rosenbergs," July] are that the Rosenbergs were guilty and that Freed's play is untruthful about this, and that all the characterizations in the play are oversimplified and tendentious. In my one-paragraph review (*New York*, May 18), I mentioned the play's "jerky structuring, boggling lacunae, palpable special pleading, less than smooth production." This means, clearly, that I was not impressed either by its truthfulness or by its subtlety. But I did feel that it had a certain dramatic power—as does *Richard III*, a finer play by far but likewise historically dishonest and politically partisan—and such power counts for something in the theater. But Mr. Weinstein insists on judging the play as reportage or a historiographic document, which it clearly isn't, and which even the better plays by Hochhuth and Weiss he seems to admire are not.

How can he object to my point that even if the Rosenbergs were guilty, "the trial was a monstrous farce," when he himself applauds Alexander Bickel's description of it as "a ghastly and shameful episode," and adds that the death sentence was "an awful and unwarranted act"? He next objects to my saying that the play conveys what it feels like to live under "a hysterical government and an intellectually and morally inadequate President." He does not explain, though, just what he objects to. If he means that the play does not convey such a mood and atmosphere, let him say so; but since his entire discussion is limited to a literal-minded weighing of facts, mood and atmosphere are obviously not his concern. Or does he mean to say that Nixon & Co. are not hysterical, not variously inadequate? If so, I'd like to see him argue that one. It would have nothing to do with theater criticism, but then, neither has his article.

Finally, he seems to object to my remark that trial by jury is faulty. But his only feeble rejoinder is that "jury trials are meant to be decided on points of evidence and not on moral testaments." I agree that that is what they are "meant to be"; but if Mr. Weinstein claims that in a time of panic induced by the Korean War and Joe McCarthy they actually *are*, I am afraid I must differ.

JOHN SIMON
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Allen Weinstein maintains that there is "a growing crisis in confidence among many leading cultural spokesmen in the United States," and seeks evidence of this "crisis" in the critical reception accorded *Inquest*, Donald Freed's play about Julius and Ethel Rosenberg. Mr. Weinstein may conceivably have a legitimate point to make, but he has no right to attempt to strengthen his case by attributing to me opinions I have not expressed and do not hold.

Mr. Weinstein writes: "That jury trials are meant to be decided on points of evidence and not on moral testaments, remains unimportant to these critics, as one can see from Julius Novick's review of the play in the *Village Voice*." Then he quotes from my review as follows:

> I conceded at the beginning of this review that for all I knew, even after seeing the play (I have done no reading on the subject), the Rosenbergs might just conceivably be guilty, but I have been writing ever since of my love for them, or at least for their stage-images, or for myself-in-them. I have called the Rosenbergs (I was referring specifically to the stage-Rosenbergs, but I meant the real ones too) [*sic*]—I have called the Rosenbergs "decent, simple, and lovable people"; would I still say this even if they turned out to be guilty? Yes, I think so, although in that case, inside their simplicity would be suspended a deep and sad and dishonorable complexity. [The *sic* is Mr. Weinstein's.]

If Mr. Weinstein can really "see" what he says "one can see" from this passage or from anything else in my review, then he can probably "see" flying saucers, and Reds under beds, as well.

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Mr. Weinstein continues: "Perhaps the best way to appreciate the extraordinary meaning of Mr. Novick's moral argument would be to substitute the word 'Eichmann' for 'the Rosenbergs,' change the tenses, and read the quotation back for sound." This is a peculiar sort of appreciation. Where in God's name does Mr. Weinstein get Eichmann from? I was writing quite specifically about the Rosenbergs; the Eichmann case is not remotely a parallel instance. Mr. Weinstein's little substitution puts me in mind of the rabbi in my old synagogue, who used to invoke "Dachau!" every year on Yom Kippur in the course of raising money for the UJA, because he was confident that any mention of the Nazis would cause his congregation to salivate automatically.

Needing, for the purposes of his argument, some critics willing "to accept radical myths as unvarnished fact," Mr. Weinstein seeks to misrepresent me as one such. But in my review I was trying to get beyond the questions of whether or not the Rosenbergs "did it," and what the jury in the case ought to have done. "To me at least," I wrote, "this is not just a play about two people named Rosenberg, but about that whole vaguely defined but vividly remembered phenomenon that is now called the Old Left." The Old Left was deeply compromised, as I took pains to point out, by its dishonorable complicity with Stalinism, but it was punished by base-minded men with a severity that far exceeded its guilt, and I find it pathetically lovable for its well-intentioned, doomed naiveté. For all of this, the Rosenbergs—in Mr. Freed's play as in life—stand, for me, as affectingly human symbols. This set of opinions and feelings scarcely constitutes a "radical myth."

I agree with Mr. Weinstein that the radical analysis of recent and current history is often dangerously simplistic; but Mr. Weinstein himself, in his eagerness to ferret out and pillory "revisionists," is guilty of the same sort of simple-mindedness and failure to make distinctions for which he attacks the radicals. Mr. Weinstein admits that the execution of the Rosenbergs was "an awful and unwarranted act"; he'd better watch out, or some super-Weinstein will be calling him a Comsymp.

JULIUS NOVICK

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was appalled at the inaccuracy and misrepresentation in Allen Weinstein's article. Mr. Weinstein repeatedly refers to the case as a lesson of the 20th century and chastises Freed for "not paying any respect to the complex and partly disguised personalities of his two protagonists." So what? I agree that the characterization of Julius and Ethel lacked depth. Nevertheless, the horror of the Rosenberg affair *should* be reenacted. Freed's play was not a character study of two passionate Communists, nor of the motives which drive people to Communism. Freed's play was about a fear-ridden society and the tragic results to individuals when this fear becomes too great. . . .

BILLIE LEDERMAN

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Mr. Weinstein admits that "the prosecution submitted not a single purloined document or other actual proof that espionage had been committed apart from the sworn statements of its three confessed conspirators." These witnesses, in early accounts to their own attorneys, told stories which differed significantly from their later testimony at the trial. Mr. Weinstein admits that "by comparing the pretrial statements with the trial testimony of the three government witnesses, two already under indictment for capital crimes and the third threatened with indictment, even those persuaded of the Rosenbergs' guilt might question the complete credibility of the witnesses." May I ask Mr. Weinstein: without documentary evidence and without completely credible witnesses, what basis is left for conviction on such a charge? . . .

Seventeen years after their execution the Rosenbergs emerge from the play *Inquest*, from the various books, and, above all, from the historical record, as innocent.

MURIEL GOLDRING

Brooklyn, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . How can one excuse Allen Weinstein's remarks in 1970, when the lies of Harry Gold and the Greenglasses have been established beyond dispute? Mr. Weinstein must know that the convictions rested on the Greenglasses' testimony . . . and he even refers to the new evidence, which thoroughly discredits their testimony: Greenglass's handwritten statement to his lawyer; his wife's characterization of Greenglass to the lawyers; the discovered console table; the affidavit of his brother, Bernard Greenglass, concerning David's theft of uranium from Los Alamos; the affidavits of top atomic scientists.

Those who did not believe Greenglass—and this group also included Albert Einstein and Harold C. Urey, even before the discovery of the new evidence—authors William Reuben, John Wexley, Walter and Miriam Schneir, and Donald Freed, are described by Mr. Weinstein as "revisionists." They are then faulted for not providing reasonable explanations of how Greenglass obtained $3,900 in his possession, if not, as alleged, from the Rosenbergs. Mr. Weinstein adds: "Similarly, who if not Harry Gold actually gave the Greenglasses the $400 which Ruth deposited in an Albuquerque bank in June 1945 one day after Gold allegedly gave them the money in exchange for atomic information?" . . . Many "revisionists" believe that Greenglass obtained this money from his thefts and black marketing in Los Alamos. But even without this highly plausible explanation, what bearing does the money have on the guilt or innocence of the Rosenbergs? If Greenglass had accused Allen Weinstein instead of the Rosenbergs, would lack of knowledge concerning Greenglass's finances establish Weinstein's guilt?

Mr. Weinstein "proves" that the playwright lacks sincerity because he failed to portray the Rosenbergs as "dedicated Communists." He says: "Not only does this go unmentioned, but the suggestion is made that the pair had been casually 'progressive' people, perhaps a bit to the Left of FDR." This is totally untrue. The play showed the Rosenbergs exactly as the trial transcript did, "pleading the Fifth" where questions of Communist affiliations were involved, but clearly expressing themselves as friends of the Soviet Union, far more than just casually "progressive". . . .

AARON KATZ

Brooklyn, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Allen Weinstein makes much of Donald Freed's omission of the Communist affiliations of the Rosenbergs, but he does not refer to the more basic omission of what happened to Morton Sobell; the

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story of Sobell glaringly exposes the shocking injustices and violations which permeated the case from the beginning. To Mr. Weinstein, Freed was too harsh in attacking the prosecution and trial judge; to history, he will appear too lenient.

Morton Sobell was convicted . . . on the uncorroborated testimony of one man, Max Elitcher, a confessed perjurer, whose testimony was purchased by special assistant prosecutor Roy Cohn; Cohn promised Elitcher immunity from prosecution for his own crimes if he testified. The law journals have pointed out that even if every word of Elitcher's testimony were true, it still would not provide sufficient evidence to prove Sobell guilty of the crime he was charged with in the indictment. . . .

Sobell was injected into the trial, like Elitcher, to provide another witness against the Rosenbergs. When he refused to follow Elitcher's example and purchase his own freedom by falsely implicating the Rosenbergs, Judge Kaufman imposed the maximum prison sentence permitted by law—thirty years. The judge was rebuked for this sentence by every law journal which studied the case. . . .

If Allen Weinstein is genuinely opposed to the distortion of truth, instead of attacking playwrights like Freed, let him encourage them by saying, "Right on! . . . on to the case of Morton Sobell." It may be too late for the Rosenbergs, but it is not too late for a full pardon for Sobell.

LEAH FELLER
Brooklyn, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . In jurisprudence there are five degrees of proof:

1) proof beyond reasonable doubt;

2) a preponderance of the evidence in favor, that is, more evidence for the fact than for the contrary;

3) a standoff;

4) a preponderance of evidence against;

5) disproof beyond reasonable doubt. . . .

A study of all the evidence in the Rosenberg case, examined dispassionately and sufficiently after the fact for emotions to fade as a factor in judgment, shows that it fits into the fourth category: while the evidence is insufficient to prove the defendants innocent beyond reasonable doubt, the preponderance of the evidence is against their guilt. At this late date, twenty years after the event, why should COMMENTARY wish to revive the question in the form of a presentation of the facts slanted so as to support the finding of guilt against the probably-innocent Rosenbergs? . . .

HERBERT HARVEY
Morrisville, Pennsylvania

ALLEN WEINSTEIN writes:

My critics fall into several overlapping categories: those who defend *Inquest*, those who defend the Rosenbergs, and one who defends their co-defendant, Morton Sobell.

Muriel Goldring chides me for not proclaiming the Rosenbergs innocent, after having accepted some aspects of the revisionist argument. On what basis might their conviction be justified, she asks, if the Greenglasses and Harry Gold were not "completely credible witnesses"? I would refer her to Herbert Harvey's letter, in which he outlines five degrees of legal proof. On the basis of available evidence, I consider the *second* degree (no pun intended) appropriate to the manner in which *most* historians today view the Rosenberg case: "a preponderance of the evidence in favor [of guilt], that is, more evidence for the fact than for the contrary." Walter and Miriam Schneir, the leading revisionist writers on the case, have found it easier to throw into question *portions* of the Greenglass and Gold testimony than to discard its *essential* credibility.

As for my general views on the problem of an alleged government "frameup," they were discussed in my article and follow those expressed in Alexander Bickel's review of the Schneirs' book (COMMENTARY, January 1966). Although the revisionists have undermined portions of the government's case, they have yet to shake its central premise: that the Rosenbergs conspired to commit *some* form of espionage connected with the Los Alamos duties of their relative, David Greenglass.

Leah Feller is correct. I should have discussed Morton Sobell's involvement in the case, if only to express my own belief that Sobell was probably innocent. This "basic omission," however, was also Donald Freed's, since Sobell does not appear as a major character in *Inquest*. On the basis of evidence offered at the trial, primarily un-

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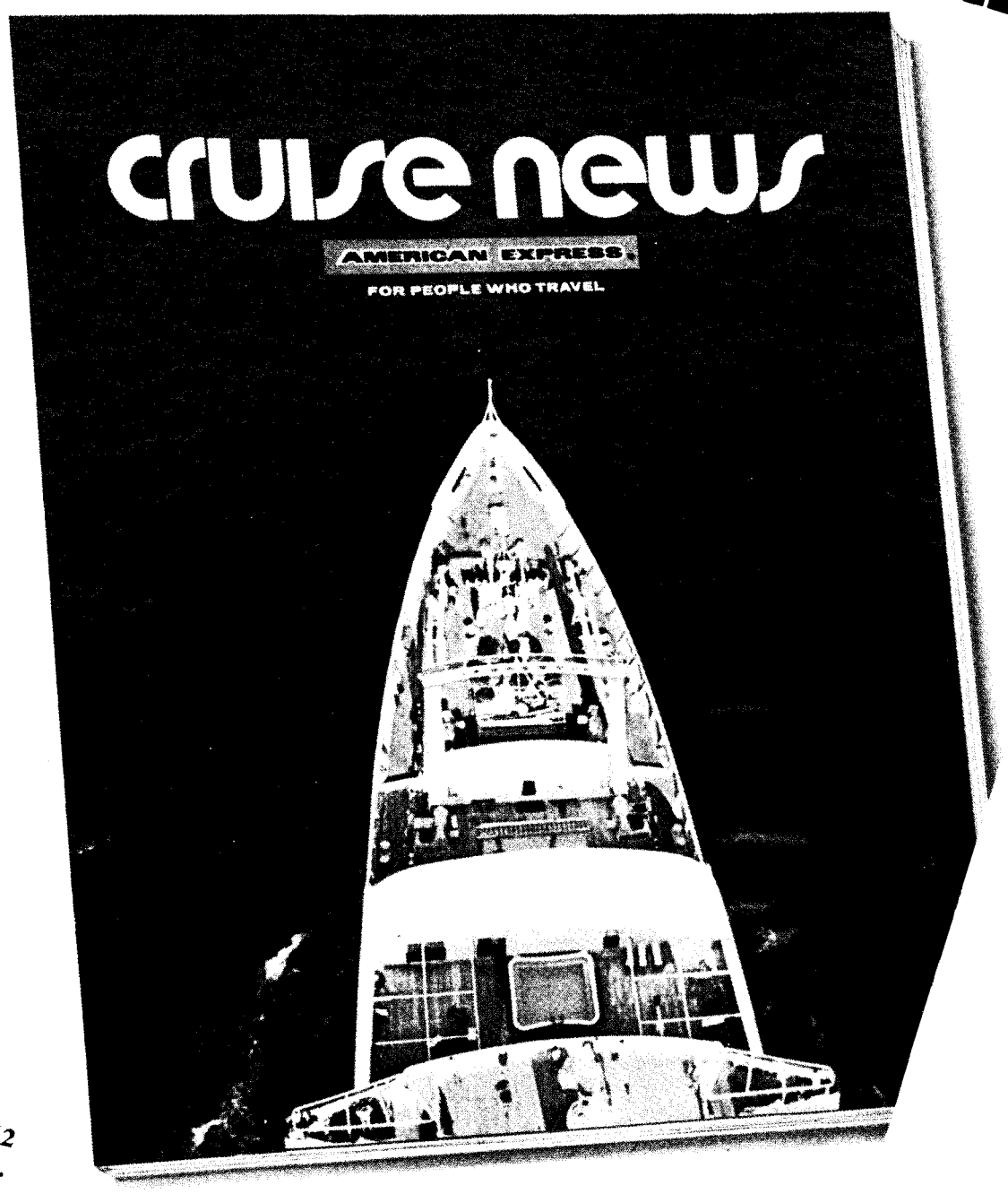

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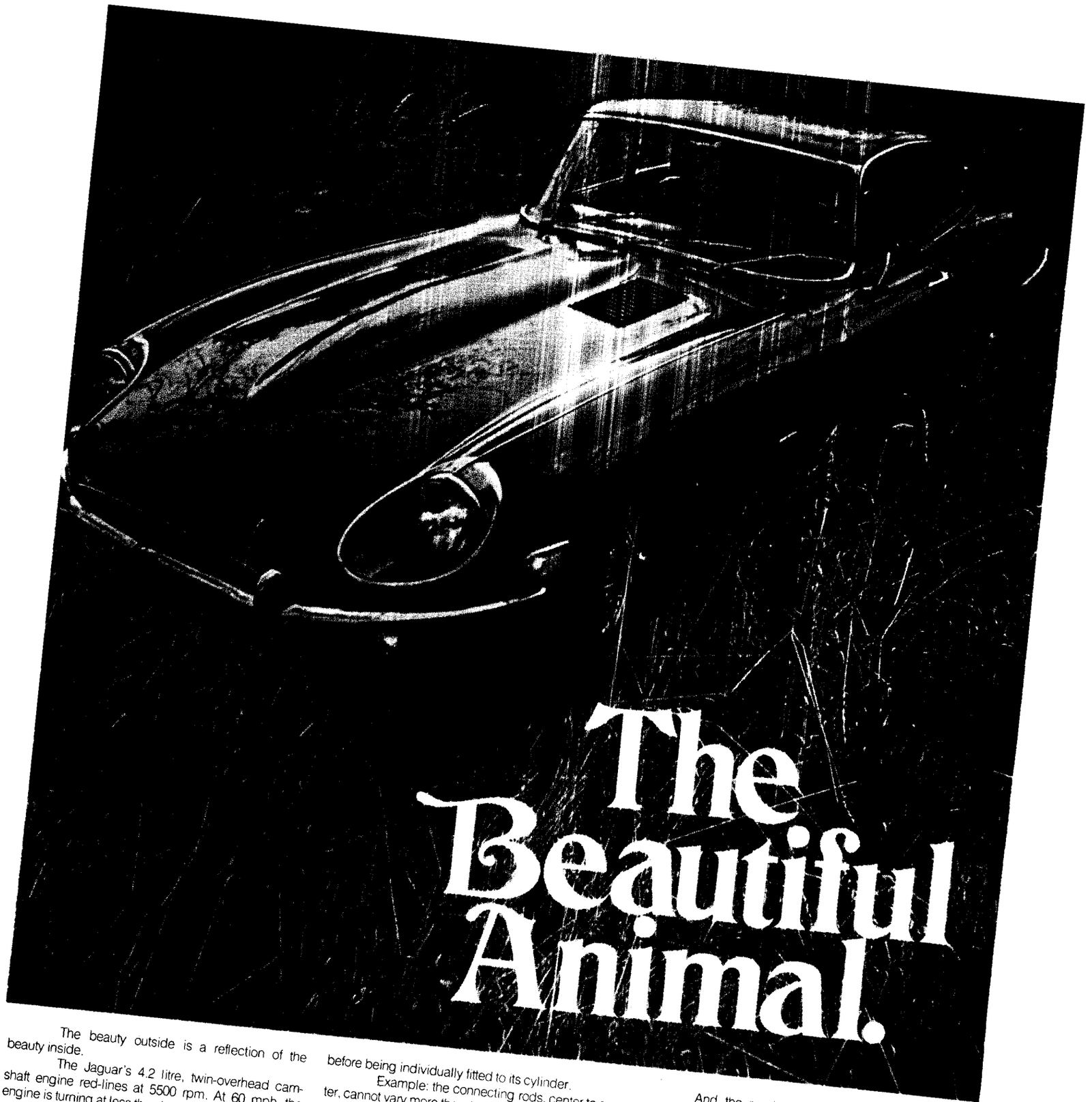

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substantiated testimony by *one* government witness, Sobell should have been freed. It is shameful that the government refused him parole during his long imprisonment and that it continues to deny him a full pardon. On the other hand, I question whether Sobell was "injected into the trial like Elitcher [the figure who testified against Sobell], to provide another witness against the Rosenbergs," especially since Sobell's "vacation" trip to Mexico at the time he was being sought for FBI questioning had alerted the government to his uncooperative attitude.

Readers must judge for themselves the exact meaning of those passages from my article quoted by Julius Novick. I am puzzled that my use of the Eichmann analogy should have been misconstrued, especially by a man of such rare critical insight: who else could have captured in print the extraordinary spectacle of an entire synagogue on Yom Kippur "salivating automatically" at the mention of Dachau? But let me try once more to explain my meaning: Most human beings seem "decent, simple, and lovable" in the eyes of those closest to them. Eichmann, by common account, was a good family man. He also happened to be a mass murderer. One does not preclude the other, any more than character ever determines public behavior. Would Mr. Novick, then, call a stage-Eichmann a "decent, simple, and lovable" human being if he had witnessed a play that portrayed him as both a Nazi war criminal and a devoted family man? Would he say then of Eichmann what he observed of the Rosenbergs: "Would I still say this even if they turned out to be guilty? Yes, I think so, although in that case, inside their simplicity would be suspended a deep and sad and dishonorable complexity." I will acknowledge Mr. Novick's need for a double moral standard on the matter, if he in turn will attempt candidly to answer the real question raised in my review: "Do these fairly common personality traits acquit [the Rosenbergs] of the charge of espionage?"

Mr. Novick goes on to say that his review actually made a more complex moral argument concerning the "Old Left," for which the Rosenbergs stood as "human symbols." Once more, the reader must untangle for himself the contradictory hyperbole of Mr. Novick's analysis. He calls the Old Left "deeply compromised" by its "dishonorable complicity with Stalinism," but, at the same time, "pathetically lovable for its well-intentioned, doomed naiveté," and, in the end, "punished by base-minded men." I doubt that those who suffered during the McCarthy period for their earlier radicalism deserve such a Manichean requiem. On another of his complaints, the *Village Voice* critic might wish to reread his entire review, if only to refresh himself on those opinions he claims not to have expressed or held. Consider, for example, the following ones:

> I came away with feelings of deep affection and respect for the Rosenbergs and for the kind of Americans they were . . . now I am tempted to think, "How could anyone *not* be sympathetic to the Rosenbergs?" . . . Nothing that I have seen for many months has moved me so much. . . . Most of the acting is straightforward and fine; there are no stereotypes and no caricatures. . . . For me, *Inquest* was a requiem for the days when I was a boy licking envelopes for Vito Marcantonio.

John Simon does not share Julius Novick's fluttery enthusiasm for *Inquest*. Mr. Simon catches me out on two facts: first, that his review did point out the play's aesthetic shortcomings; and second, that I am not a drama critic while he is. Mr. Simon's other observations fail to impress me. For one thing, he seriously misquotes Alexander Bickel, who stated explicitly that the Rosenbergs' *execution*, not their trial, "was a monstrous farce." Mr. Simon also seems slightly befuddled about the precise issue posed in revisionist accounts of the Rosenberg case, which is not the "fairness" of the trial itself but the purportedly doctored evidence and perjured witnesses used to secure the conviction. Even the Rosenbergs' chief counsel acknowledged at its close the *trial's* fairness. What was at issue was the veracity of particular government witnesses and the sentence imposed by a particular judge, not the integrity of American law "in a time of panic." Obviously the public hysteria which accompanied the Korean War and the disclosure that Russia possessed the atomic bomb influenced—probably even more than Senator Joe McCarthy's distant malevolence—Judge Kaufman's decision to impose the death sentence. That jurist's remarks upon sentencing the Rosenbergs stand out even today as perverse testimony to the degree to which ordinary political beliefs can harden, under the proper circumstances, into paranoid suspicions. The Rosenbergs were neither Kaufman's moral monsters nor Freed's spotless saints.

But if I am not a drama critic, neither is Simon a historian. The "mood and atmosphere" of his letter make it difficult to determine whether he is equating, in some manner, today's America and its President with the "hysterical government" and the "intellectually and morally inadequate President" we had at the time of the Rosenberg case. If so, I would remind him that Harry Truman occupied the White House for most of those proceedings, and whatever his failings, few historians, if any, would apply to him any such label. As for "Nixon & Co.," despite their many anti-Communist excesses during those years, they (or at least Mr. Nixon) had nothing to do with the Rosenberg case itself.

Such maladroit and imprecise judgments do not always characterize Mr. Simon's criticism, but having unfurled a "devil theory" of recent American life when reviewing *Inquest*, he apparently intends to continue saluting it. He asks whether I "mean to say that Nixon & Co. are not hysterical, not variously inadequate?" The "& Co." epitomizes Mr. Simon's own degree of hysteria as a critic. Does "& Co." include Agnew or Rogers, Mitchell or Moynihan, Laird or Hickel, perhaps even David Eisenhower? Or does he mean *all* of them? Mr. Simon "& Co." might wish to reflect at some point on the inadequacies of a frenetic intellectual community confronted with the necessity for making careful distinctions, even "in a time of panic": the aesthetic distinction, for example, between *Richard III* and a work like *Inquest*.

Both plays, he tells us, possess "a certain dramatic power," although the former was "a finer play by far." *What* "certain dramatic power" does Mr. Simon have in mind that links the brooding eloquence of Shakespeare's Gloucester with the "matinee-idolish mugging" (Simon's phrase) of Freed's villains? This may be mere quibbling, however, since dramatic taste is keenly personal and none more so than Mr.

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Simon's. Therefore, I willingly concede his restrained enthusiasm for *Inquest*—"Perjury, perjury, in the high'st degree"—if, in return, he will sanction my own preference for the Elizabethan mode of agit-prop:

Shine out, fair sun, till I
have bought a glass,
That I may see my shadow as
I pass.

Aaron Katz's claim that "in 1970 . . . the lies of Harry Gold and the Greenglasses have been established beyond dispute" seems a bit premature. For one thing, the stolen memoranda from O. John Rogge's office do not "discredit" Greenglass's testimony that Julius Rosenberg recruited him for espionage; quite the contrary. For another, the scientists' statements to which Mr. Katz refers do not deal with Greenglass's confessed activities as a spy, only with his faulty sense of the atomic-bomb mechanism. Bernard Greenglass's affidavit that his brother David had stolen "a sample" of uranium from Los Alamos is a rather curious document. The Rosenbergs' lawyers produced this convenient testament on May 31, 1953, as they fought a last-minute legal battle to stay the couple's execution, which occurred on June 19. Greenglass's memo itself goes on to state that both his brother David and his sister-in-law, Ruth Greenglass, had said that David later threw the uranium sample into the East River. The Schneirs (and Mr. Katz) conclude from this belated affidavit—supported only by the doomed couple's own statements—that Greenglass actually accumulated the $400 and $3900 in question through "thefts and black marketing in [war-time] Los Alamos." That no evidence has yet been uncovered—"documentary" or otherwise—to substantiate this assertion appears a matter of no concern to the revisionists.

The term "revisionist" itself disturbs Mr. Katz. He should be assured that historians do not use it as a term of reproach, nor did I intend it in that sense. It refers generally to newer scholarship that challenges commonly held historical interpretations. I have written "revisionist" history myself, a recent example of which is my reassessment of the Alger Hiss case, forthcoming in the *American Scholar*.

At times Mr. Katz employs the same type of *ad hominem* arguments as Julius Novick. If Greenglass had accused *me*, instead of the Rosenbergs, he says, lack of knowledge alone of Greenglass's finances would not have established *my* guilt. Neither, however, did it establish the Rosenbergs' guilt. Once again, the reader might refer to my article and to Alexander Bickel's review of the Schneirs' book for further discussion of this point.

Whether Donald Freed did or did not disguise the Rosenbergs' Communist affiliations is a question that only those familiar with the play can judge. At one point, "reconstructing" a conversation between the defendants and their lawyer, Emmanuel Bloch, on their reasons for "pleading the Fifth," the dramatist implied strongly that the couple had no such affiliations to hide. He does show them as "friends of the Soviet Union," but then, how could he not? Most New Dealers "a bit to the Left of FDR" held such sympathies openly during the 1933-45 period. Freed, on the other hand, used almost none of the significant trial testimony in which Julius Rosenberg refused to say whether he had ever been a member of the Communist party, a charge that cost him his Signal Corps job in 1945. Nor did he portray Rosenberg, again during the trial, refusing to answer the prosecutor's many questions concerning prior involvement in the Young Communist League or the Communist party. To clarify the matter, I was not trying to "red-bait" the Rosenbergs at this late date. I was simply wondering why Freed chose not to dramatize those very aspects of his protagonists' lives which made them appear, whether guilty or innocent, such convenient victims in an era of anti-Communist hysteria. The point is not legal, therefore, but dramatic. The playwright chose to obscure the radical associations that had shaped the activities of his main characters and which, if the Schneirs are correct, had been their only "crime."

Finally, I must thank Herbert Harvey for his comments on juridical "proof," although I disagree with his conclusion for reasons already rehearsed sufficiently. As for Billie Lederman's complaint, I would remind her that it was Freed, not I, who viewed the Rosenberg case "as a lesson of the 20th century." Who could quarrel with the importance of a skillful drama on the Rosenbergs? Mine was only with the unskillful melodrama that I reviewed.

A recent statement by *Inquest*'s producers would disappoint most of my critics. Messrs. Guber and Gross insisted somewhat disingenuously in a letter to the Sunday *Times Magazine* that they were merely "doing a play about injustice" and that "proving the innocence of the Rosenbergs was not our aim." Rather, the Rosenbergs "were chosen as symbolic people." For any future playwright concerned with doing more than exploiting the Rosenbergs "as symbolic people" to make a political point, their actual lives remain, as I said in my article, "a possible paradigm for understanding how the accidents of history reshape human purpose and personality in our time." Such a dramatist might wish to consult not only the Schneirs' book, which is essentially a legal brief for the defense, but also more balanced accounts of the case like Jonathan Root's *The Betrayed*. This neglected study, published in 1963, remains the best single treatment of the cultural "mood and atmosphere" within which the Rosenbergs pursued their lives. I might be tempted to suggest a possible scenario for such a play myself, but respect for the undoubtedly waning patience of COMMENTARY's readers reminds me that, for the moment, enough has been said about the Rosenberg case.

Who Is a Jew?

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

One wonders why Robert Alter tries to present the Orthodox side of the question "Who is a Jew?" in his article, "The Shalit Case" [July], when he is clearly prejudiced against it from the outset. While it is his prerogative to be critical of that position, it is sheer irresponsibility to misrepresent it.

For example, Mr. Alter cites the Israeli newspapers *Haaretz, Maariv, Davar,* and *Lamerhav,* but he does not mention *Hatzofeh*, the newspaper of the National Religious party, in which is to be found the finest exposition of the Orthodox viewpoint. It is the National Religious party, which is second to none in its total participation in Israel's life, that carries the responsibility (or onus, according to Mr. Alter) for the Orthodox position, and Mr. Alter surely owes it to his readers, if not to himself, to study that position and

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present it fairly, even if he disagrees with it. . . .

It is quite common to picture the Orthodox parties as employing political blackmail in order to achieve their goals. In a democratic society, however, religious parties have the same right and responsibility to make conditions for entering into a coalition as, let us say, the doctrinaire Marxists of the Left. . . .

It is conceivable that Mrs. Meir was genuinely concerned with an awesome problem and not acting solely out of political considerations (quite a common and acceptable action for most political leaders). This writer was in Israel the day the Supreme Court decree was made public and found that a considerable segment of the non-religious sector was profoundly disturbed by the possible consequences of the Supreme Court decision in the Shalit case. But Mr. Alter, for some unfathomable reason, has omitted this consideration, which is the crux of the Orthodox position.

Observant Jews have not married outside the faith since the beginning of Jewish history. (Had they done so, even two generations ago, there would be no Shalits, no Alters, and no Israel.) They will not marry Christians in the United States, nor will they marry them or their descendants in Israel, Russia, or Timbuktu. I'm certain Messrs. Alter and Shalit will concede that this is their right. Certainly this position is the conviction of a substantial minority, possibly even a majority, of Israel's Jewish citizens. There are leading figures in Gahal and Mapai who espouse the traditional position on "Who is a Jew?" A Prime Minister of Israel must consider the possibility of a house divided against itself. The Jewish people have existed without a state for almost two thousand years. Many a non-Orthodox Jew in Israel realizes that a state cannot exist without its people. For the committed Jew, the problem is neither amusing nor a pastime. Had the Orthodox Jews ever regarded it as such, those Jews who are amused today just wouldn't be around to laugh.

Rabbi Louis Bernstein
Rabbinical Council of America
Bayside, New York

Robert Alter writes:

I am grateful to Rabbi Bernstein for giving me the opportunity to clarify one basic point in my own view of the religious-secular entanglement in Israel. I am not opposed to—or in Rabbi Bernstein's phrase "prejudiced against"—Orthodoxy as such, but I deplore the fact that Israeli Orthodoxy has established itself as a party competing within the realm of power politics. It seems to me that this political role has done nothing but compromise the integrity of institutional religion in Israel and has compounded the estrangement of the mass of Israelis from traditional Judaism. The Shalit affair is a case in point. As Rabbi Bernstein observes, no one would deny an Orthodox Jew his right to refuse to marry a Christian, but this was hardly at issue. What was at stake was the attempt to extend the halakhic norms to the non-halakhic category of *le'om* and thus to impose a religious definition on a secular aspect of Israeli national identity. I respect anyone who sincerely takes upon himself the obligations of halakhic Judaism, but I abhor the attempt to convert Israel through means of political coercion from a *medinat hok* to a *medinat halakha*, from a secular to a religious state.

For the record, I think most intelligent Israeli traditionalists would agree that the finest exposition of the Orthodox position was made not by the party-liners of *Hatzofeh* but by Ephraim Urbach, professor of Talmud at the Hebrew University, writing in *Haaretz*. As for the "segment of a sector" of non-religious Israelis who were disturbed by the possible consequences of the Supreme Court decision, I discussed this group in my article and even quoted a characteristic statement—from a column by the late Natan Alterman, which is a document that speaks only too clearly for itself.

Repression, Right and Left

To the Editor of Commentary:

Walter Goodman's articles are usually informative and, I believe, trustworthy. The more's the pity when he allows himself to be victimized by silly clichés. He writes in "The Question of Repression" [August], "There are not many policemen to whom one would lightly entrust the power to keep suspects in jail without a trial or to break into a home without a warrant," suggesting in the context that the Nixon crime legislation does, or proposes to, give these powers to policemen. Neither is the case.

The new federal law gives the power of pre-trial (not "without a trial") detention to a judge (it requires a hearing, too) and not to a policeman, "lightly" or otherwise. "To break into a home" policemen need warrants as before, although they may now dispense with the customary announcement if evidence may be destroyed, or their life endangered, when they stand on ceremony. It should be possible to oppose Nixon or Mitchell without misrepresenting them or being as "unfastidious," to use Mr. Goodman's word, as they are alleged to be.

Ernest van den Haag
New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

I hope Walter Goodman's "The Question of Repression" marks the beginning of the end of the reign of terror instituted by Chomsky, I.F. Stone & Co.

It was gratifying to read Mr. Goodman's trenchant prose and withering logic as he said all the things that are not supposed ever to be said on pain of excommunication from the elite Left.

Jules S. Trieb
New York City

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . Walter Goodman admits, to be sure, that the trials of the Chicago Seven and Dr. Spock amount to "political persecutions," but concludes that our courts are not being used by the government in an effort to silence protest since Dr. Spock did win and the Chicago case may be reversed on appeal. He thus seems to contend that maladroitness of execution absolves the government of palpably malignant motives.

Similarly, he tells us that repression within the university context has come *from* the students; have they not barred doors, upset offices, hooted down speakers, and do not those "who now cry 'Repression!' after having been cheerleaders to every student excess . . . owe . . . us an accounting"? More than a slight perversity to morals, on the one hand, and logic, on the other, seems to be worked when barring doors, et al., is compared with armed troops gunning down unarmed human beings. . . .

Also, we are told that the raids

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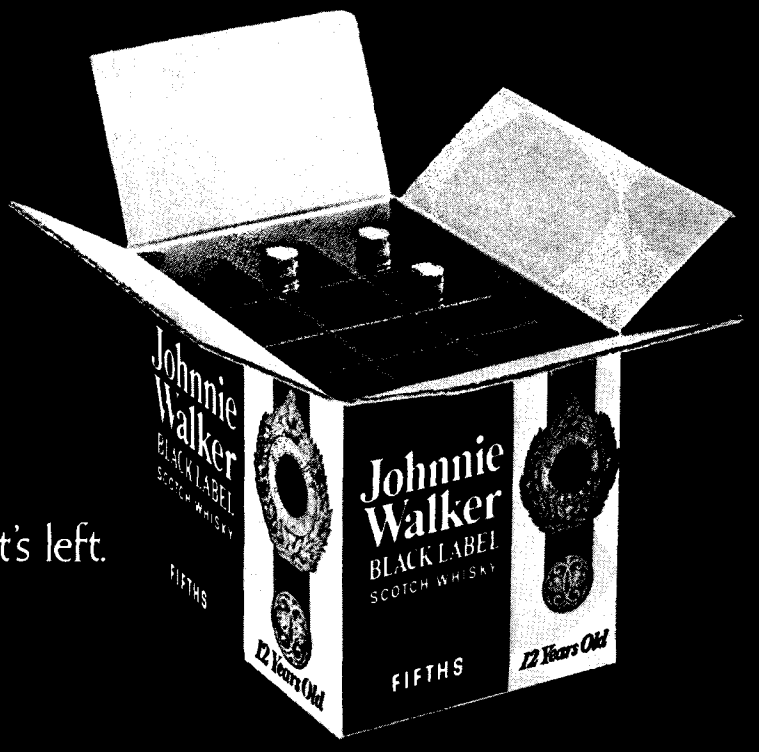

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on the Panthers "seem to have been fairly spontaneous cases of spleen-venting—with perhaps discreet encouragement from the FBI," and that analogies to attacks on Communists in Germany in the 30's are misdrawn because "Far from being a threat of any dimensions to the regime in Washington, the Panthers' political strength is negligible." A rational observer might conceive that this last consideration only heightens the quality of brutality and wantonness attending the raids and begin to wonder what grotesque shapes a calculating power structure, which genuinely feels imperilled, might be capable of fashioning.

What is particularly annoying is that Mr. Goodman is so clearheaded and sober; he recognizes that this is not a halcyon period for dissent, that "Every one of the counts in the indictment of 'repression' in America bears watching." But his well-modulated, perceptive powers will not be panicked into discerning apocalypse behind every Spiro Agnew utterance. However, has he mused upon the possibility that such circumspection in railing against its precursors may in fact smooth the way for that apocalypse?

ELLIOTT M. ABRAMSON
Bayside, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Walter Goodman hopes to persuade—surely he cannot hope to convince—his co-members of the more squeamish support troops of the regnant Establishment . . . that there is nothing very much, or at any rate nothing very much out of the familiarly painful and lamentably ordinary, going on these days for them to get excited about. . . . If he sincerely believes this to be the case, he is wrong; if he does not, he is rather wicked; in either case, his views are dangerous to public safety and private morals. . . . For if the frightened, New York *Times*-gorging liberals and the brave and gaudy radicals stop screaming their already bloodied heads off, Nixon and Agnew and Mitchell and Reagan and Wallace and their multitudes of eager helpers will not shrink from chopping them off for them, quickly and neatly; and neither Mr. Goodman, I suppose, nor his fellow faithful sophisticates, nor most of the rest of us will have much left to act calm and composed and judicious and dismissively superior about.

ROBERT BARNAI
Beverly Hills, California

WALTER GOODMAN writes:

The aside which Mr. van den Haag quotes was a careless one, and I apologize for my misleading effort at jocularity. The crime bills were still in committee when my article was written, and I did point out that "the most troubling provisions like preventive detention . . . will not become law without clear restrictions on the circumstances under which they can be used." I wish now that the restrictions were clearer than they are.

Mr. Abramson's line of argument bespeaks a desire to find catastrophe from which nothing I reply is likely to distract him. If the courts free defendants like Dr. Spock, it must be attributed to "maladroitness of execution" rather than to the functioning of an independent court system. If one observes that adventurist bands on campuses have been courting repression with their disruptions, one is charged with moral perversity. If it is suggested that police attacks on the Panthers do not bear comparison with Nazi Germany, our "rational observer" turns to "grotesque shapes" that *might* be fashioned by "a calculating power structure." Now, I agree with Mr. Abramson that any power structure that feels threatened might respond in the Nazi mode; but I was trying to write about what is really happening in the country today, and I do not see there the grotesque shapes fashioned by Mr. Abramson. As for his last sentence, I hope that it is still possible to criticize the Nixon-Mitchell-Agnew mentalities for what they do rather than for what Mr. Abramson fears they might do. I also hope, sincerely, that nobody chops off Mr. Barnai's head.

Anti-Semitism, Survey-Analysis & Assimilation

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Lucy S. Dawidowicz clearly has strong feelings about Negro anti-Semitism. These feelings, along with her pretensions to social-science expertise, have led to an article ["Can Anti-Semitism Be Measured?," July] as unfair as it is uninformed.

With respect to my study, *Protest and Prejudice*, she quotes out of context, drops crucial qualifying words and phrases, makes misstatements of facts, misinterprets data, misunderstands the nature of survey research, uses a 1970 perspective to attack 1964 data, makes undocumented charges, and tries to pass off her strongly held value positions as scientific criticism; not to mention the intellectually lazy tactic of attacking the study not on its own terms for what it tried to do, but in light of questions and methods it chose not to deal with.

Mrs. Dawidowicz seems to be making three orders of criticism:

1) My personal values affected my findings.

2) My study of the black community in 1964 has been "turned into ancient history."

3) Surveys are inappropriate for measuring anti-Semitism.

After being attacked by segments of the white and black Left for doing a study that is seen as "racist" and a "cop-out" precisely because it tries to be "objective," "neutral," and "scientific," it is refreshing, even if not defensible, to be attacked for doing what is seen as partisan scholarship.

The main "evidence" adduced to support Mrs. Dawidowicz's charges are a statement from the preface about my involvement and concern with the civil-rights struggle and a quote from the dedication of the book which states:

> To those oppressed because of their racial, religious, or ethnic identity in the hope that they will become more militant and more tolerant and thus transcend evils so long and cruelly perpetrated by man on man.

Would Mrs. Dawidowicz prefer a dedication which hoped that those oppressed for such reasons would become militant *and* perpetuate the intolerance, bigotry, hatred, oppression, and cruelty so characteristic of ethnic subordination? Or, perhaps, she would prefer a society where those oppressed for ethnic reasons simply knew their place and didn't rock the boat for fear of producing an even worse society?

It is one thing for a researcher to acknowledge his values. It is quite another for a reviewer, who as a citizen and a Jew happens not to like the implications of the data, to take this acknowledgment as evidence of partisan scholarship.

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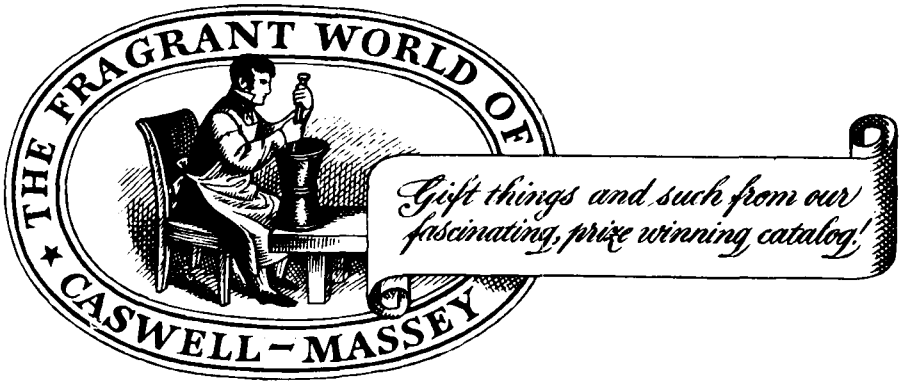

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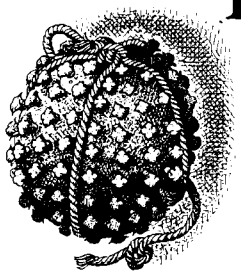

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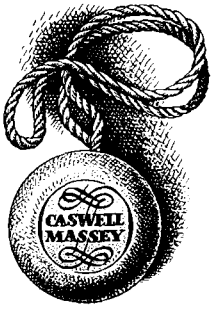

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no way always consistent with my values. In fact, I felt very ambivalent about some of the findings of mass moderation on the part of American blacks. That such information was nevertheless reported has led to criticism from those who think that social science should only be a vehicle for furthering political ends. For one strongly concerned with civil rights, to write a book stressing the variety of attitudes held by different groups of blacks, rather than emphasizing how extensive militancy and hatred of whites are, can hardly be called partisan scholarship.

One standard by which a body of scientific data can be evaluated is its consistency with other research. That the large number of studies done on mass black opinion since mine, and the eight studies concerned primarily with Negro attitudes toward Jews, reach descriptive conclusions essentially similar to mine, hardly bespeaks a partisan approach. Unless, of course, we are to believe that there is a massive conspiracy among a large number of researchers.

The accusation of partisan scholarship seems to emerge from the fact that the data have political uses. Mrs. Dawidowicz is upset that during Ocean Hill-Brownsville and related controversies some people took the data out of context and wrongly used them to deny the presence of black anti-Semitism. I am also upset by this. I am equally upset by the way white conservatives have misused the data on moderation to argue that blacks are essentially content and that problems stem from a small number of agitators. As well, I have not been pleased by the way some black nationalists have selectively used the data to argue that a majority of blacks support aggressive violence. This use of the same research study by those holding opposite ideologies hardly bespeaks partisan scholarship.

Data on such issues are complex and rarely ever lend themselves to completely unambiguous interpretations. There is always a danger of misuses of the data. But what is the alternative? Would Mrs. Dawidowicz prefer a discussion of mass attitudes that takes place without reference to a systematic body of empirical data, as her favorable reference to the "evidence" on these matters provided by Claude Brown suggests? Or would she prefer to have the data reported only if it happened to be unequivocal-

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ly consistent with her personal values and interests, in this case, documentation of the extreme threat posed by black anti-Semitism as perhaps might be indicated by findings that all blacks hated Jews and only Jews?

Mrs. Dawidowicz's wish to discredit the data is so great that she is led to outright distortion, even beyond taking material out of context and denying the many qualifications contained in the book (such as my many warnings about the difference between attitudes and behavior, experience and perception, and that all opinions count equally only in a survey). For example, in contrasting my results with those of the UCLA study of Watts she writes: ". . . social researchers at UCLA, studying aspects of the Watts riot, found that 30 per cent of their respondents indicated signs of black militancy. Their measuring devices differed from Marx's but when the UCLA researchers administered Marx's scale to their Los Angeles respondents, the latter's black militancy evaporated." This is patent untruth. The UCLA researchers never applied my scale. In fact, they were unaware of it at the time of their study. Furthermore, her effort to suggest that the carefully carried out UCLA study done at a different point in time, in a city I didn't study, using a single question rather than an index, whose results on level of support for the Black Muslims have generally not been replicated by other research, somehow has major bearing on the validity of my study is unjustified.

The moderation found by my study and by many subsequent studies does not pose for her any questions about the problems inherent in a common-sense approach to complex social issues. Rather, she seeks to discount data which are inconsistent with her subjective conceptions of what they should be, by noting, "nothing it seemed was what it appeared to be. Was the index at fault? Was the sample a fault? Were the interviewers at fault?" It is precisely because common-sense approaches are very often wrong that we do social science. The resolution of the difficulty lies not in Mrs. Dawidowicz's unsophisticated and undocumented methodological critique but in her unwillingness to accept empirical data which run contrary to her sense of what the data are, or should be. (The errors of methodological in-

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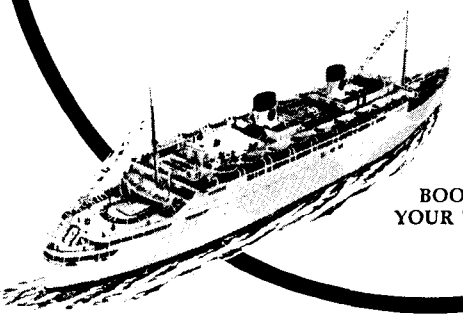

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terpretation in the essay are numerous and not of interest to the general reader. Here let me simply note Mrs. Dawidowicz's lack of understanding of the criteria by which questions are chosen for an index, the use of positively worded items to deal with problems of aquiescence, her confusing necessary and sufficient causes with statements of a probabilistic nature, and her failure to grasp the important difference between an index vs. a single question.)

Not acknowledging her retrospective view, Mrs. Dawidowicz accuses the study of being an uncritical apology for black militancy. Though in so doing she ignores the fact that the data and my value statements applied to the militancy of 1964, not that of 1970, some of which is clearly unrealistic, self-destructive, and a far cry from the earlier humanism of the movement. The study found that those most likely to be militant over civil-rights issues in 1964, rather than being the frustrated, alienated, hate-filled *lumpen* misfits, who populated the Eric Hoffer-Ronald Reagan image of activists, tended to be instead an elite group in the black community. They were better educated and informed, less socially isolated, had a more positive self-image, a higher morale, and were less hostile to whites. If such findings constitute an apology for the earlier phases of the civil-rights movement, so be it.

Mrs. Dawidowicz's failure to understand survey analysis and what my study tries to do is clearly indicated in the statement, "the radical shifts in the civil-rights movement have, of course, turned Marx's sociology of the black community in 1964 into ancient history." In a postscript to the book's paperback edition, I consider whether the data collected in 1964 are still relevant in the face of the profound changes that have occurred on the civil-rights scene and whether or not the mass moderation found in 1964 has now disappeared. Here it is useful to differentiate between the analytic and descriptive findings. My concern was primarily with the former. To argue that my sociology is now out of date would require Mrs. Dawidowicz to produce systematic empirical data that shows, for example, that religion no longer operates to inhibit militancy, that social mobility no longer encourages militancy, that being removed from the values of the traditional South and having a positive self-image no longer increases the likelihood of civil-rights concern, or that having a low morale and being socially isolated are now suddenly conducive to a militant ideology. Does Mrs. Dawidowicz really believe that those with a high degree of unpleasant economic contact with merchants they perceive to be Jewish have suddenly become among those least likely to be anti-Semitic? Are attitudes toward Jewish and non-Jewish whites suddenly no longer related? Have the 20 per cent of blacks who make a distinction between Jewish whites and other whites suddenly started seeing Jews as worse than other whites, not better? With respect to the descriptive question of whether mass moderation still exists, the 30-odd studies summarized in the postscript, carried out in 1967 and 1968, clearly suggest that mass moderation is still present. In many ways the attitudes of the masses of black people were not terribly different in 1969 from what they were in 1964, the mass media and dramatic events notwithstanding. From all of the subsequent research that I have seen, these findings still hold. If Mrs. Dawidowicz has evidence to suggest that any of the above is no longer true, she has certainly not presented it.

Mrs. Dawidowicz argues that the study is lacking in validity because it did not sample disproportionately from certain segments of the black population, such as activists and college students. In doing this she again misses the point of the study. A study's validity and the criteria for serious methodological criticism is not based on whether groups of interest to a reviewer are oversampled. Rather, it comes from having a sample that is representative of the group one is interested in studying and in using questions that elicit as closely as is possible a person's actual feelings and attitudes.

The problem I chose to study was what effect did the civil-rights movement have on the black community *in toto*? In 1964 we had a number of useful historical and autobiographical accounts and studies on particular groups, like CORE and the Muslims, but there was relatively little data on the attitudes of the black community in its entirety toward the civil-rights movement. What was its impact on the masses of blacks? Who were those most knowledgeable and most concerned with the civil-rights movement? What kinds of attitudes were held toward whites in general and Jews in particular? A fair evaluation of the study requires that it be criticized in light of how well it deals with these questions.

To argue that I deliver a *coup de grâce* not only to my study but to the entire enterprise of "Patterns of American Prejudice" by saying "the important questions are clearly not so much how many, but who, how intensively, and in what way?" is to rip an argument out of context. In saying this, I meant the important questions for the future of civil strife in America. This was in a context which discussed the future of race relations in American society and was not an abstract discussion of the relative merits of various methodologies, as Mrs. Dawidowicz's use of the quotation implies. There are a large number of important questions for which surveys are vital and indeed the only way to gain information. Among them are processes of opinion formation, sources of mass support and constraint for public figures and policies, and the distribution of attitudes in a population and their change over time.

Surveys are inherently no better and no worse than any other social-science technique. The worth of a technique depends on the type of questions one poses. Because surveys have limits, as do all methods (including Mrs. Dawidowicz's citation of "evidence" from Claude Brown), does not mean they are unsuitable for dealing with certain aspects of anti-Semitism. To be sure, broad interdisciplinary studies covering the vast sweep of history will yield richer accounts than single focused studies. Yet such focused studies are the building blocks out of which more grandiose efforts emerge. Furthermore, precisely because grand theories depend on a reading of "the facts," and our common-sense assumptions about the facts are so often wrong (such as the erroneous belief that blacks single Jews out for special hatred among whites or that blacks are appreciably more anti-Semitic than whites), it is necessary to do concrete empirical studies, even at the risk of occasionally showing common sense to be correct.

The changes that have occurred

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since my study was written in 1965-66 have led me to speak out and write against the crass use of anti-Semitism for political and other purposes by some black leaders, as well as the kind of social conditions which may encourage this. Yet it seems to me that in America it is exceptionally shortsighted and parochial to move from seeing anti-Semitism as *a* problem to seeing it as *the* problem. . . .

GARY T. MARX
Department of Sociology
Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Concerning the proposition of Gary T. Marx that black anti-Semitism is a reflection of black hostility toward all whites, it is necessary to add that it is also an expression of the black urge to identify with white American Anglo-Saxon Protestant culture. Let us not forget the sixteen-year-old black girl who wrote in her introduction to the black exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum that, with regard to the attitude toward the Jew, the blacks would find themselves at last "with the majority."

The attitude toward the Jew is one of a number of foci of black ambivalence with regard to white values. The black rejection of those values is usually expressed in the conscious ideology, which explores the alleged vacuousness of white American culture; the desire of black activists for participation in and acceptance by the dominant white culture, on the other hand, is expressed in less explicit forms. Anti-Semitism serves this duality of impulse exquisitely; hence the awareness that black anti-Semitism does have a qualitative uniqueness. In fact, it enables the black man to become white in relation to the Jew, who becomes black in American and Western Christian cultural terms (and in putting the matter this way, I do not mean to associate myself with the ahistorical view of Sartre).

JOSEPH NEYER
Department of Philosophy
Rutgers University
New Brunswick, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In her review of *The Tenacity of Prejudice* Lucy Dawidowicz presents herself as the alert critic exposing the authors' hidden value biases to the naive reader. Unfortunately, her own strong value commitments as a "Jewish survivalist" prevent even an accurate reading of the text. Mrs. Dawidowicz reports that we "consider a Christian intolerant if he is against intermarriage with a Jew." On the contrary, we wrote: "While disapproval of intermarriage can have roots in hostility toward Jews, it can also follow from a legitimate desire on the part of non-Jews to maintain their religious and cultural identity" (p. 43). However, Mrs. Dawidowicz is not entirely off the mark when she accuses us of viewing group survival as "an obstruction to the creation of a prejudice-free, neutral society." It seems clear that a democratic order places limits on what is acceptable in the name of group survival. As we noted in the book: "The more private the context, the more defensible the discriminatory practice; the more public the context, the less legitimate does all discrimination become. An example of a relatively legitimate form of discrimination is opposition to religious intermarriage (provided, of course, opposition . . . does not seek legal sanction). At the other extreme is political discrimination on religious, racial, or ethnic grounds" (p. 89). However, the problem is still more complex. We further noted that there are intermediate areas—the social club is a prime example—where it is unclear whether priority should be given to democratic values or to the desire of social groups to preserve their identity. On such issues (we also have black nationalism in mind) it is sometimes necessary to distinguish between what is permissible for a powerful majority and what is defensible for a frequently embattled minority. In a society committed to both pluralism and democracy, the majority has to forgo certain luxuries of self-segregation that minorities can often indulge in with little harm or moment to others.

We would answer Mrs. Dawidowicz's charge that we "seem to believe that anti-Semitism must be combatted because it is the ultimate obstacle to Jewish assimilation" in much the same way. In one sense, her characterization fits: we believe that Jews should be free to "assimilate" if they so desire, unhindered by Christian (or Jewish) survivalism. At the same time, we would be moral cretins not to oppose anti-Semitism for the simple reason that it is a peril to Jews. One does not have to be a "Jewish survivalist" to defend Jewish survival.

Much of Mrs. Dawidowicz's review-essay is a polemic against survey analysis which, according to her, "serves ultimately to limit our understanding of anti-Semitism." Such criticism is hardly to be taken seriously. Survey research, like every academic perspective, is necessarily limited and partial and cannot answer all of the many questions that can be asked about so complex a phenomenon as anti-Semitism. If only because many good historical studies are available, we did not think it necessary to recapitulate the long history of Jewish suffering and the many ways in which Jews have been used as scapegoats. Instead we focused on a single question on which there was much disagreement and contradiction in the literature: why, in a society where anti-Semitism is indigenous and widespread, is it accepted by some individuals and rejected by others? This question not only is important in itself, but as we argue in the book, shows how historical theories have been overgeneralized and misapplied. From the fact that Jews have historically served as scapegoats for national ills, it is often inferred that individuals become prejudiced because they are seeking a scapegoat for their personal frustrations. Such analogical reasoning does not stand up under empirical scrutiny. There is little to indicate that people become anti-Semitic out of personal frustration, either psychological or economic. However, as we made clear (p. 188), while people do not typically become anti-Semitic because they seek a scapegoat for their personal frustrations, in an economic crisis their anti-Semitic beliefs can become activated and turned to scapegoating purposes. Instead of gratuitously assailing surveys for being ahistorical, Mrs. Dawidowicz might have reflected on the relation between survey findings and the cycles of anti-Semitism that seem to mystify her.

At the same time that Mrs. Dawidowicz criticizes surveys for being pedestrian, she entirely ignores the larger theoretical issues raised in our book. Nowhere does she mention our disagreement with the theory of prejudice propounded in *The Authoritarian Personality* and uncritically accepted for two decades by laymen and scholars alike. Nor does she mention our disagreement with Stem-

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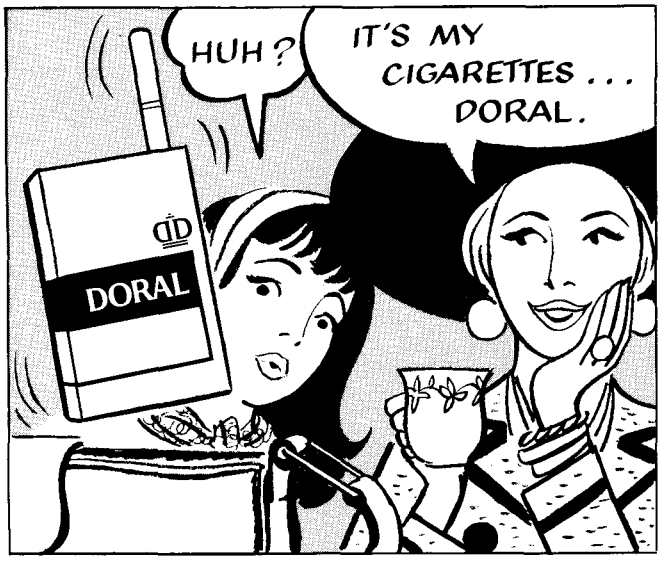

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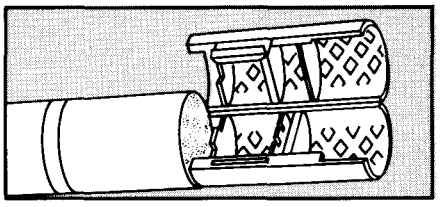

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ber's recent conclusion that anti-Semitism is a vanishing phenomenon (this would indeed make any future resurgence of anti-Semitism mysterious).

Finally, Mrs. Dawidowicz dismisses the evidence presented in our study (and others) concerning education as a countervailing factor to prejudice, and does so on the flimsy grounds that a few college students indulge in astrology and other excesses. We never said (indeed our data show otherwise) that a modern education is 100 per cent effective in combating prejudice. What we did say is that at the present time education is practically the only institution in our society that is any bulwark at all.

Most of all we are dismayed that Mrs. Dawidowicz could become so enmeshed in her private opinions and loyalties as to lose sight of the implications of our study, as well as the others in this series, for the status and future of the American Jewish community.

GERTRUDE J. SELZNICK
STEPHEN STEINBERG
Survey Research Center
University of California
Berkeley, California

LUCY DAWIDOWICZ writes:

Understandably unhappy with my comments, Mr. Marx, like Hamlet in impotent rage, unpacks his heart with words and falls a-cursing. He accuses me of benightedness about the arcana of survey research. He regards the construction of an index of black nationalism, for instance, as being as complex and demanding as, say, the deciphering of Linear B or the mastery of Yiddish dialectology. I will disregard the *ad hominem* arguments and address myself to Mr. Marx's specific complaints.

1) *The UCLA study* (T. M. Tomlinson, "Ideological Foundations for Negro Action: A Comparative Analysis of Militant and Non-militant Views of the Los Angeles Riot," *Los Angeles Riot Study*, Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of California, Los Angeles, June 1, 1967). Mr. Marx calls me a liar for citing this study's reference to his index. I quote two brief passages to establish my veracity and attest to Mr. Marx's limited capacity for the most elementary form of library research:

> This study will use attitudes toward the Black Muslims as the criterion of militance. This approach is different from the usual methods (e.g., Marx [appropriately footnoted with full bibliographic reference—L.D.]), which attempt to scale a series of critical items that ostensibly tap views representing gradations of militance. (pp. 1-2)

> Thirty per cent of the total sample felt that the Muslims were doing "well" or "fairly well," 35 per cent felt that they were doing "harm," and 35 per cent felt they were doing "nothing" or "didn't know" how they were doing. This is not to say that the Muslims were the preferred organization of 30 per cent of the sample; in fact, if the respondents had been asked to rank the organizations in order of preference, the Muslims would have undoubtedly finished last. Marx [footnoted] indicates that less than 3 per cent of his sample of 1,100 from four different cities felt that the Muslims, compared with other organizations, were doing the best job. Had this study used Marx's method, the data would probably have been about the same. However, in this study, sympathy could be expressed without the contamination of relative evaluation. (p. 4)

My mistake was reading the subjective for the declarative, "had" for "when." Otherwise the conclusion I drew remains valid. Mr. Marx's index of black nationalism was not the precise instrument he thought it was; other devices to measure this phenomenon showed it to be of different proportions and intensity.

2) *Out of context.* Mr. Marx claims I took out of context the last paragraph of his postscript to the paperback edition of *Protest and Prejudice*. He was speaking, he argues, of substance (real life), not methodology, when he wrote: ". . . playing the numbers game with public-opinion data can be conducive to highly unrealistic assessments." Do I now hear the voice of the activist in the words of the social scientist? If indeed "the important questions for the future of civil strife in America" are, to quote Mr. Marx once more, "not so much how many, but who, how intensively, and in what way," then (a) I have not quoted him out of context, and (b) those are precisely the questions to explore if social research is to have any validity and not be divorced from real life.

Mr. Marx's remark that he was "upset" that some people "wrongly" used his book "to deny the presence of black anti-Semitism" sends out bad vibes. At the height of those troubles at Ocean Hill-Brownsville and elsewhere, Mr. Marx was quoted in the *Wall Street Journal* as saying that "Jews are incredibly paranoid. They see an anti-Semite under every rock."

Mr. Marx's letter has not disappointed my expectations of him. A man who cannot distinguish between Eric Hoffer and Ronald Reagan can scarcely be competent to distinguish between anti-Semitism and anti-whitism, or to recognize anti-Semitism at all.

Mrs. Selznick and Mr. Steinberg grant, grudgingly and periphrastically, that my interpretation of their values was on mark. They defend themselves on one point: they *did* say that disapproval of intermarriage was not necessarily an expression of anti-Jewish feeling. Right, but notwithstanding the qualification, they constantly used the responses to the question on intermarriage as an indication of discrimination.

The underlying and more important question here is whether attitudes toward intermarriage, social clubs, and Christmas carols in the public schools are indeed what Selznick and Steinberg made of them—indicators of anti-Jewish discrimination, albeit more defensible than other forms of intolerance because more private. The answer to this question, as I wrote in my article, revolves on one's view of what society is or should be. My friend Gavin Langmuir says the basic problem is agreeing on what is meant by anti-Semitism. If all kinds of dissimilarities and antagonisms are regarded as anti-Semitism, we are no closer to an understanding of what anti-Semitism is or how it works.

Mrs. Selznick and Mr. Steinberg complain that I did not take their book, and the whole series, seriously, with all their implications for the status and future of American Jews. I thought that was what my article was all about. What is the American Jewish community to make of these assorted findings, each volume with its own definition of anti-Semitism, its own measuring devices, and limited by its methodology and its authors' subjectivities? On the basis of these books, I wouldn't like to have any Jewish organization mapping policy and programs for me.

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"Issues" & August

To the Editor of Commentary:

In a recent piece I had in the *New York Review*, I described, as I had seen them, some of the aggressively nationalistic construction workers who have been intimidating many peaceful people in New York, and wrote of "crane operators and other lordly specialists who from the heights of their well-packed pay envelopes look down on blacks who can't even become plumbers' apprentices." In his column, "Like Fathers, Like Sons" [August], Norman Podhoretz uses these words to suggest that crane operators also are "kids" entitled to the sympathetic consideration that, in Mr. Podhoretz's view, only student protesters among the young seem to get. The crane operators I observed and listened to all last spring, week after week as they worked on an unnecessary new armory near my office, were not kids, not in their early twenties. But they were certainly lordly, to put it mildly, about Negroes, anti-war protesters, and all the "kids" who dared to pass in beards, long hair, and irreverent looks at the American flags tattooed on a crane operator's arms. Mr. Podhoretz also knows perfectly well that "young people" who are black find it extremely difficult to become apprentices in the building trades.

I realize that Mr. Podhoretz does not permit himself enough space every month to do more than Take A Position. So I will not comment on his illusion that he is able each month, in less than a page, to do justice to such formidable topics as Death, War, and Fathers and Sons. But I do protest his irritable misuse of my words.

Alfred Kazin

New York City

Norman Podhoretz writes:

I am at a loss to understand in what sense I was guilty of a "misuse" of Mr. Kazin's words. I quoted those words, as he acknowledges, correctly. I even took scrupulous care to specify that he had applied them not to young workers in particular but to "construction workers in general." No "misuse" there, surely. What then is he complaining about? Is he taking issue with the point I was mainly intent on making in my piece—namely, that when young workers express hatred of their contemporaries on the campus or declare their determination to vote for George Wallace, they are rarely accorded the kind of sympathetic understanding that student protesters invariably receive from literary intellectuals like Mr. Kazin (who once wrote an article calling the students of today "the party of hope" and "the conscience of our time")? Since his letter is an excellent illustration of the very double standard in the distribution of sympathetic understanding I had in mind, it would seem unlikely that he has any quarrel to pick with me on that score either. Can it be that my "misuse" of his words consists simply in the fact that I directed attention to the snobbery and self-righteousness they reveal and whose embarrassing nakedness his letter so desperately attempts to dress up in the usual moral finery?

So far as my column in general is concerned, I could wish that, having congratulated himself on his fair-minded restraint in not commenting on it, Mr. Kazin had then actually refrained from commenting on it. Still, I can assure him that I am under no such megalomaniacal "illusion" as he projects onto me. My aim is merely to make a point or two every month, and to do so if possible without falling into the unctuousness or the peevishness that brevity of expression seems—to judge both from his letter and from the piece which contained those words of his I quoted—capable of producing in Mr. Kazin's normally harmonious cadences.

To the Editor of Commentary:

Norman Podhoretz's remark [Letters from Readers, August] about the "implications of an alliance between the patriciate and the underclass against the Center" reminded me of Orwell's similar statement: "An army of unemployed led by millionaires preaching the Sermon on the Mount—that is our danger."

These days Commentary is a sane voice in what seems to be the fantasy world of the intelligentsia. . . .

W. R. Steinhoff

Ann Arbor, Michigan

To the Editor of Commentary:

The August issue of Commentary is all star: Goodman, Lipset and Raab, Himmelfarb, Podhoretz, Hartley, and Decter. Cheers to all of you!

Alan Armstrong

Haverford, Pennsylvania

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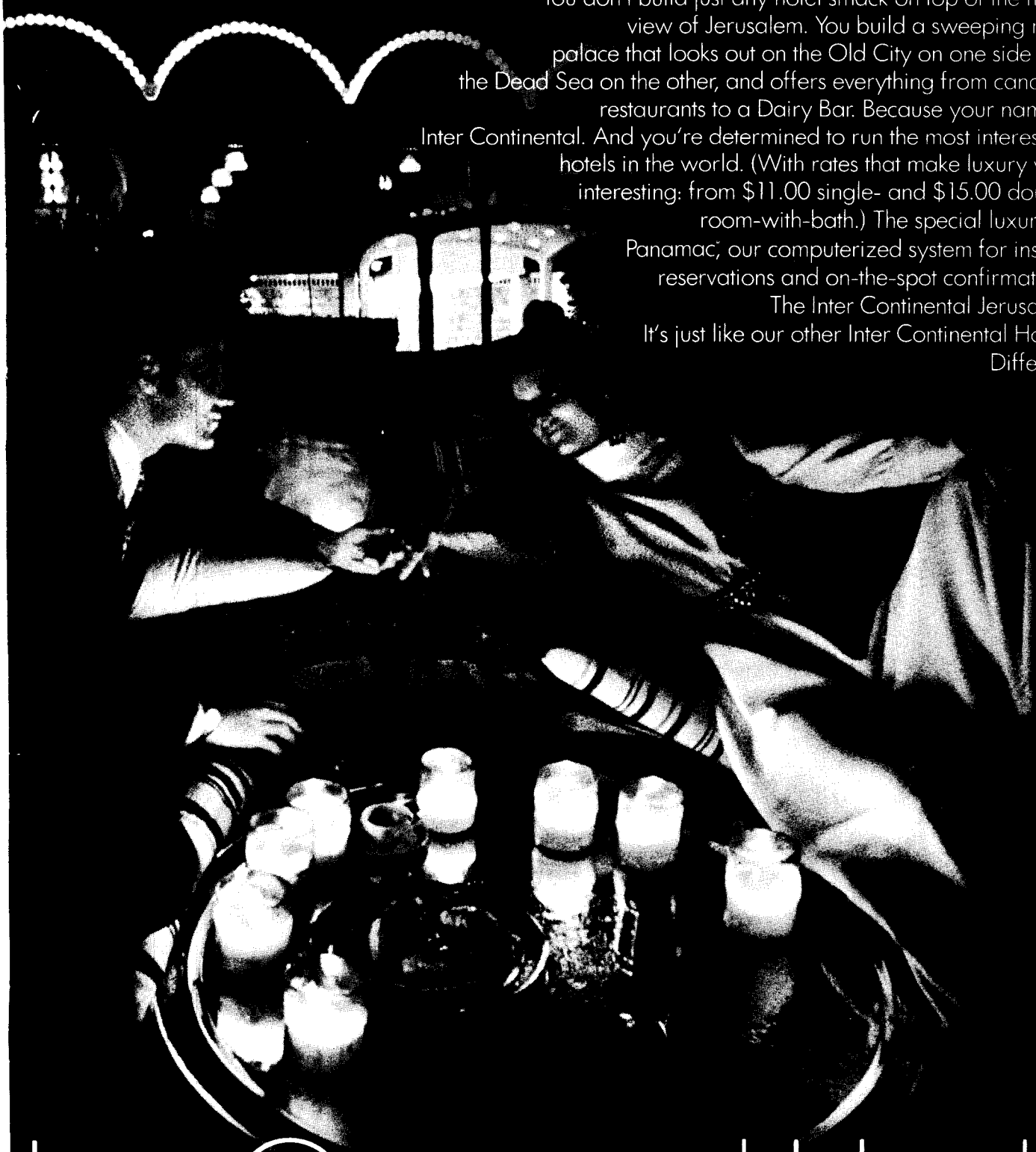

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Israel and the Palestinians

To the Editor of Commentary:

Shlomo Avineri's "The Palestinians and Israel" [June] is bound to convince not a few of your readers, being a most superior piece. On this subject, highmindedness is seldom coupled with real intelligence, and the author almost wins me to his point of view by the force and breadth of his thought.

I say "almost" because I'm finally not convinced, and for three reasons: 1) Professor Avineri underrates the conflict between Israel and the Arab states; 2) Professor Avineri underrates the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union in the Middle East; and 3) Professor Avineri overrates the Palestinians.

Professor Avineri writes: "Ultimately, there is no conflict between Israel and Egypt, or between Israel and Syria; the conflict is between Israel and the Palestinians." Here, I think, Professor Avineri's language betrays a weakness in his argument. *Ultimately*, there is no conflict between the United States and North Vietnam, yet we have been fighting for years in Southeast Asia. Or take it the other way: is there *ultimately* a conflict between Israel and the Palestinians? I should say there is a conflict between Israel and the Palestinians right now, as there is a conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union in the Middle East right now. Professor Avineri asserts that even if the Arab states make peace with Israel, the Palestinians will go on fighting. The question is, though, could they go on fighting with any hope of success?

I will not take up the question of Soviet aims in the Middle East, for no doubt others replying to Professor Avineri will say something on this point. What is conspicuously weak in his argument, though, is his clear preference for discussing Soviet policy in 1948 to confronting Soviet policy of 1967 and of today.

Finally, I think Professor Avineri accepts the Palestinians in ways that I cannot. I think he identifies them with the early Zionists and there are many American intellectuals who have a similar feeling for the Palestinians. Let me state quite candidly that I am not at all drawn to the Palestinians, as, in fact, I was never drawn to the early Zionists. I cannot help remembering a very wise remark by Simone Weil: an uprooted people can only uproot other peoples. Did not the Zionists play a part in uprooting the Palestinians? But now, lo and behold, the Zionists have become Israelis. They have taken root in the land of Palestine, and so are we now to give support to the Palestinians whose intent is to uproot them and make them refugees once again? It is to be noted that of all the Arabs, only the uprooted Palestinians are unwilling to accept the existence of the State of Israel.

Lionel Abel

Buffalo, New York

To the Editor of Commentary:

Shlomo Avineri [Letters from Readers, September] finds the TRB column in the *New Republic* (June 27), which I wrote, "dishonest" in its "partial quotations" from his article. I am sorry, I had not meant to be.

He says that the Great Powers are involved in the Middle East struggle, with which, of course, I agree. The novelty of his analysis is his assertion that, aside from the Great Powers, "the conflict between the Arabs and Israel is *originally and at its base*" (his italics) "a conflict between two national movements, and not a Great Power conflict. . . ."

I have felt this to be true and hope he sticks to his guns.

Richard L. Strout for TRB

Washington, D.C.

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . The conflict is not between Zionism and a Palestinian entity, as Shlomo Avineri argues, but between Pan-Arabism and the Jewish state. Palestine ceased to exist after the defeat of the Arab League armies in the 1948 war when the State of Israel was created and the West Bank was annexed by Jordan. . . . What really remained was the refugee problem, which was in large measure created, and perpetuated, by the Arab states.

Since 1948 the conflict has been especially with Egypt, which has assumed the leadership of the Arab League. Nasser believed himself to be the modern Arab Cavour or Bismarck, namely, the one who would succeed in uniting all the Arab world.

Arabs look upon themselves as part of a single nation, but in truth regional and historical loyalties are stronger than the vision of a united Arab world. This applies both to Egypt, which has a long pre-Arab history, and to the Maghreb states (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia). . . .

The so-called Palestinian entity, on the other hand, began only with the establishment of the British Mandate over Palestine, and twenty-eight years is not sufficient time to allow for the development of a true national entity. But the Arab inhabitants of what was formerly Palestine were much more directly affected by the Arab-Israeli conflict than other Arabs and therefore their enmity toward Israel was stronger than that of other Arabs.

Peace was not achieved after the 1948 war, owing to two reasons. One was psychological, the refusal to admit defeat, which stemmed from hurt pride. But the main reason was that the perpetuation of the Arab-Israeli conflict did not cost the Arab states anything. Hurt pride motivates states only to a limited extent. The crucial consideration is always the balancing of profit and loss. . . . Jordan, the only country which believed it could benefit from peace, was inclined to make peace but was prevented from doing so by pressure from the other Arab states. . . .

The twenty-two years since the 1948 war may be divided into two periods: the first lasted until the 1956 war, the so-called Suez war, and the second is the period since Suez. The second period has been marked by a rapid decline of Western presence and influence in the Arab world. During this time the stature of Nasser grew rapidly, beginning with his "victory" in the Suez war, or rather his having been saved from defeat by both Russia and the U.S. Egypt was the largest Arab state and the first to become independent . . . and . . . Nasser wanted to become the most prestigious Pan-Arab leader. . . . Actually, the substance of Arab unity is still several generations off. Yet to Nasser the semblance of unity appeared as real unity, and he allowed himself to be carried away by his dream and to be acclaimed by the Arab masses as the modern caliph.

The outcome of the 1967 war was different from the outcome of the 1948 war. For the first time the profit and loss balance sheet was favorable to peace on both sides. Egypt, Jordan, and to a lesser degree Syria, had been directly

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Half a century after Herman Rosenthal was gunned down and a cop named Becker was executed for the murder, a magnificent book retries the case.

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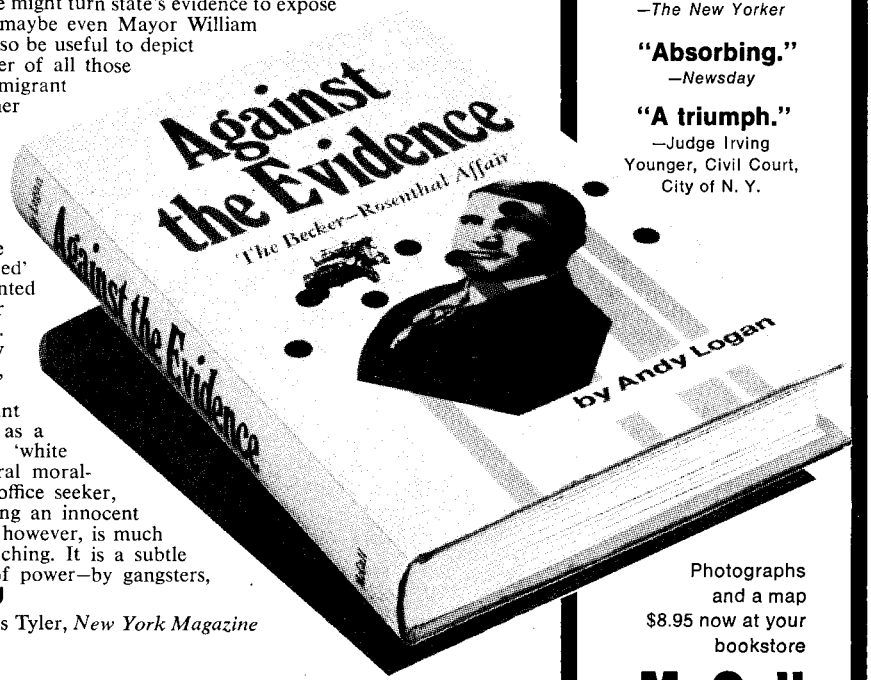
"Rosenthal was killed by his ilk—ethnic and economic. But the prosecution—the politically ambitious D.A. Charles Whitman—saw little mileage in going after a few petty guns-for-hire. So he decided, under the drive and direction of *The World's* Herbert Bayard Swope, to go after the System, the cozy arrangement by which police, pols and mob divvied up the take from gambling, prostitution and dope.

"The man chosen to personify the System was Lieutenant Charles Becker, who was in charge of a special squad to break up gambling in the Tenderloin. If it could be proved that he commissioned the killing of Rosenthal, then he could be sent to the chair, a powerful piece of political dramaturgy. Perhaps to get out of the chair, he might turn state's evidence to expose police inspectors, police commissioners and maybe even Mayor William Gaynor. In the course of the trial, it would also be useful to depict the giant German Lutheran Becker as a hater of all those 'Jew bastards,' and thereby turn the big immigrant vote against Tammany and toward a reformer or republican.

"The only thing lacking in this plot was evidence against Becker. So it was manufactured. The men charged with hiring the gunmen were indicted for murder and dumped into a house of horrors known as The Tombs. When they agreed to memorize prepared lines charging that Becker had 'forced' them to kill Rosenthal, the indicted were granted immunity, removed to ritzy quarters near Whitman, and then rehearsed for their parts. After a trial, a reversal on appeal, and a new trial conducted in a media-made lynch mood, Becker went to the chair.

"Andy Logan retries the case in a brilliant piece of research and writing. Becker rises as a hero, although—to use his own words—no 'white angel'. Whitman comes through as an amoral moralizer, unabashed social climber and ruthless office seeker, and Swope figures as the arch-villain, crushing an innocent man to death on a printing press. The book, however, is much more than a reëxamination of a judicial lynching. It is a subtle and profound study of the use and abuse of power—by gangsters, police, politicians, statesmen and the press."

—Gus Tyler, *New York Magazine*



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affected by the war. . . . Nasser was so deeply humiliated that he was even willing to resign; the work of his lifetime, the dream of Arab power and unity, seemed to him to have been destroyed by the defeat in 1967. And even Nasser eventually would have had to face reality and . . . make peace but for the Russian intervention.

The Arab Middle East, a region which Czarist Russia tried repeatedly to infiltrate during the 19th and 20th centuries . . . was the ideal sphere for Russian penetration, and almost no resistance was encountered from the West. Therefore Russia acted immediately in June 1967 and offered to supply arms, advisers, and economic assistance to Egypt. Nasser was willing to accept this aid, even running the risk of becoming a Russian puppet, for it meant that he would not then have to renounce his dream of Arab unity and the work of his lifetime. An Arab victory over Israel seemed to Nasser to be a necessary precondition for further progress toward Arab unity.

This—and not the Palestinian problem and not the refugee problem—is the reality behind the Arab Israeli conflict. Professor Avineri's conclusion is, therefore, wrong. A separate peace between Israel and the West Bank Palestinians would not advance the cause of an Arab-Israeli peace. Such a Palestinian state would be treated as a puppet state by the other Arab states, or, if it felt itself free to do so, the new Palestinian state would immediately repudiate the peace treaty. . . .

H. Z. Hirschberg
Bar-Ilan University
Ramat Gan, Israel

To the Editor of Commentary:

Shlomo Avineri's solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict appears to be a utopian one.

1) Professor Avineri seems to forget that Israel recognized the Palestinians' right to self-determination by accepting the UN Partition resolution, calling for the establishment of a Jewish and an Arab state in Palestine, but the Arab position with regard to the Partition resolution has not been changed or modified since 1947. Article 19 of the Palestinian National Covenant, which is not only the summation of the official position of the Palestinian Organization, but also the manifesto of Arab nationalism, states that: "The Partition of Palestine in 1947, and the establishment of Israel, is fundamentally null and void, whatever time has elapsed. . . ."

2) . . . The official report of the Fourth Congress of the Palestinian National Council (Cairo, Summer 1968) states that the establishment of a Palestinian state in the occupied territories will be considered: ". . . an act which entirely contradicts the right of Palestinian Arab people to the whole of its homeland of Palestine. . . . The National Council declares its absolute denunciation of the idea of the fraudulent Palestinian entity in the territories of Palestine conquered after June 5th. . . ." The council did not forget to include a warning to deter moderate leaders from acting against its decision: ". . . it is declared that every Arab, individual or group, Palestinian or non-Palestinian, calling for the vassal entity and international protection, or supporting it, is the enemy of the Palestinian Arab people and the Arab nation." What future will such a state have without the support of the Palestinian Organization and the Arab leaders? . . .

3) It seems that it is not in the interest of the Arabs to bring about the establishment of a Palestinian state on terms other than their own, i.e., the extinction of Israel. Had it been in their interest, such a state could have been established long ago. . . . One must understand that the Palestinian issue is a most powerful weapon for purposes of legitimizing the Arab-Israeli conflict . . . as well as for propaganda purposes. . . .

To summarize: the Arabs have rejected so far all attempts to solve the problem of the Palestinians and to bring an end to their plight by means of coexistence with Israel, including the solution proposed by Professor Avineri. . . .

Orit Ichilov
Department of Sociology
Hunter College
New York City

Shlomo Avineri writes:

There is apparently one common denominator underlying the various comments of Mrs. Ichilov, Professor Hirschberg, and Mr. Abel: each, in one way or another, tends to minimize the role of the Palestinians in the Middle East conflict. Ultimately, they seem to believe that the Palestinian problem was concocted by the Arab governments, Machiavellian fashion, as a device against Israel. As I sought to show in my article, there is more to the case of the Palestinians than that.

Mrs. Ichilov reiterates the present intransigent and extremist position of the Palestinian organizations. Since I never claimed that their position was anything other than extremist, there would seem to be little argument between us on this score. My point, however, was that one day the Palestinians might possibly change their stand and that Israel's policy should be calculated accordingly to facilitate this eventuality. Does Mrs. Ichilov disagree—or is she perhaps content with the extremist position of the Palestinians and hopes to see it perpetuated since it provides Israel with a convenient alibi?

Mrs. Ichilov also maintains that the solution I advocated has already been rejected by the Palestinian organizations. Since the particular solution—the establishment of a Palestinian Arab state on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip—has never been proposed by any responsible Israeli body, to say that it was rejected is somewhat less than exact. I have no doubt that the Palestinian organizations would reject such an offer out of hand in the first stage even if it were officially to be made by Israel: as presently constituted, they want nothing to do with Israel and even negate Israel's right to exist. However, Palestinians in the territories now under Israeli rule may see in such an Israeli offer a ray of hope and thus dissociate themselves publicly, as Shiadeh and Ja'abri have already done, from the extremists. Mrs. Ichilov's logic leads to an identification of the Palestinians with the policies of the guerrilla organizations. I beg to differ, and it seems to me to be patently in Israel's interest—as well as in the ultimate interest of the Palestinians Arabs—to present an alternative to the intransigence and terrorism of Arafat, Habash, and Hawatmeh.

I am a long-time admirer of Professor Hirschberg's superb Arab scholarship, and therefore it pains me to have to disagree with him on matters of historical record. I am afraid that I cannot accept his description of the conflict as one between "Pan-Arabism and the Jewish state." The truth of the matter is that the conflict antedates the existence of both Pan-

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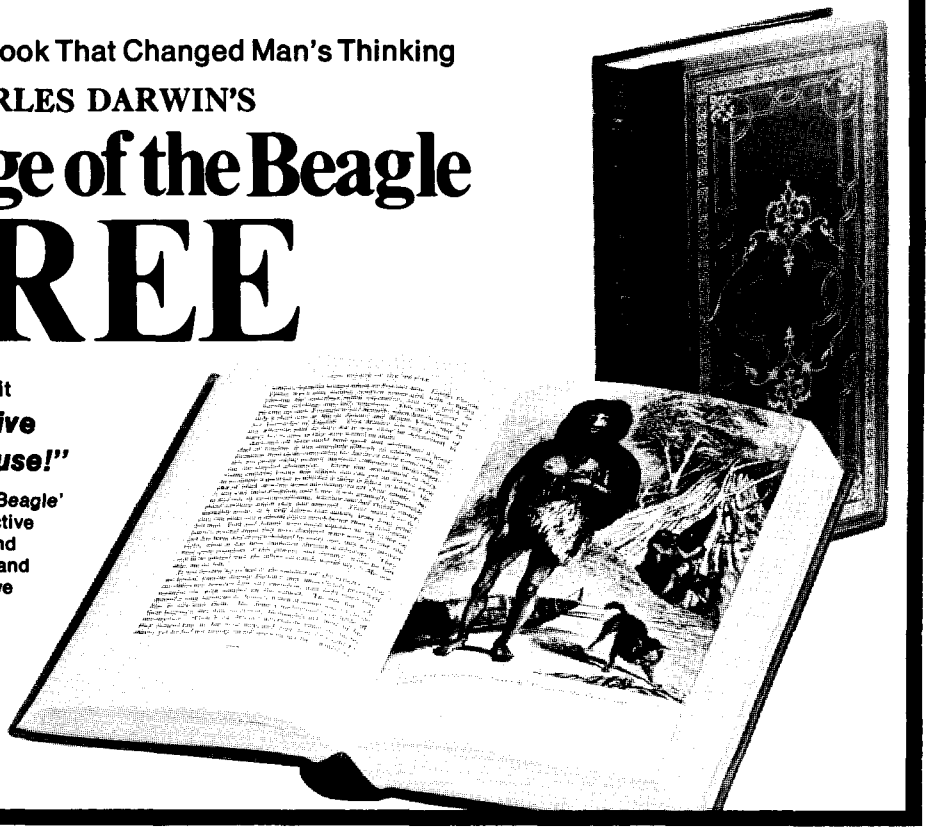

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Arabism and the State of Israel. The clashes between Arabs and Jews in Palestine in 1921, 1929, 1936-39, and 1947-48 were an expression of Arab Palestinian resentment against Jewish nationalism. It was the Mufti's great achievement, from an Arab point of view, to make the issue of Palestine and anti-Zionism the cornerstone of what later became known as the Pan-Arab movement. It was not "Pan-Arabism" which bred the conflict, but, rather, the conflict gave birth to Pan-Arabism. The dialectical irony of this should by now be acknowledged. . . .

Of course, Palestine ceased to exist as a political entity after 1948, but this legalism does not answer the problem posed by the consciousness of Arab Palestinian nationalism—which never disappeared, and indeed gained new impetus following the Six-Day War. To claim, as Professor Hirschberg does, that the only problem that remained after 1948 was that of the refugees is somewhat obtuse. This is very much like the attempt after World War II to turn a blind eye to the national dimension of the "Jewish problem" and view the survivors of the Holocaust purely as refugees who, with a little "goodwill," could be resettled anywhere in the world. . . .

Professor Hirschberg is also in error when he says that "the Palestinian entity began only with the establishment of the British Mandate." I purposely eschewed the vague term "entity" in my article; but if Professor Hirschberg means to say that under the Turks the Arabs in Palestine were not conscious of themselves as a political force, or did not realize what Zionism was all about, then the recent research of scholars of such diverse backgrounds as Mandel and Porat should convince him to the contrary. One has only to peruse Nejib Nasser's journal *al-Karmil*, published in Haifa, to realize the depth of Palestinian consciousness vis-à-vis Zionism as early as 1910.

I don't want to pick a quarrel with TRB: but let him look again at what he wrote in the *New Republic* and see for himself whether what he wrote there, using partial quotes from my article, is identical, in tone and substance, with the view he now presents in his letter. But at least I am glad he now says he is sorry.

Mr. Abel asks whether, in the event of peace between Israel and

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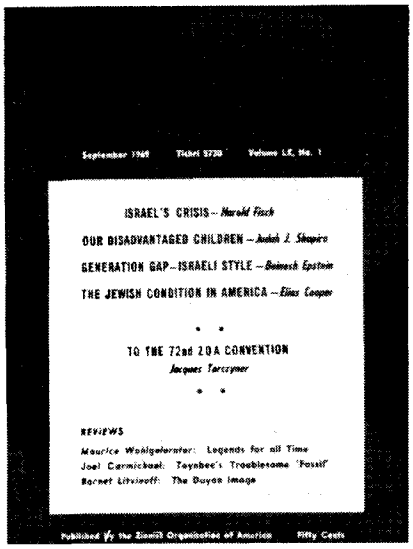
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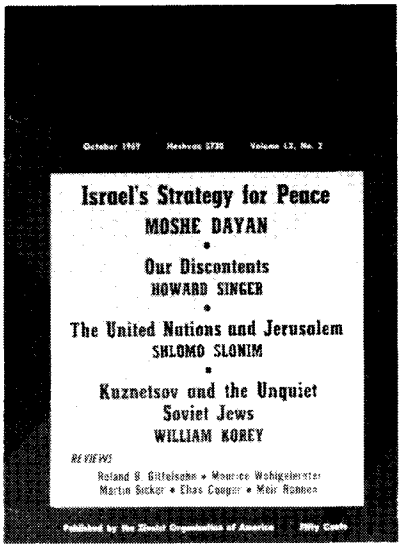
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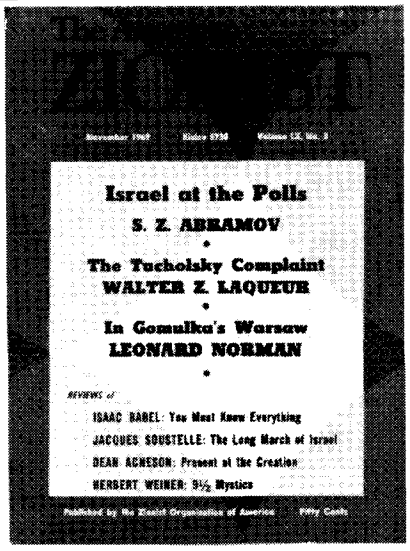
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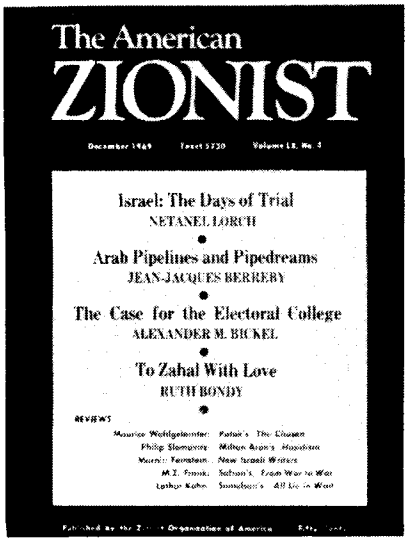

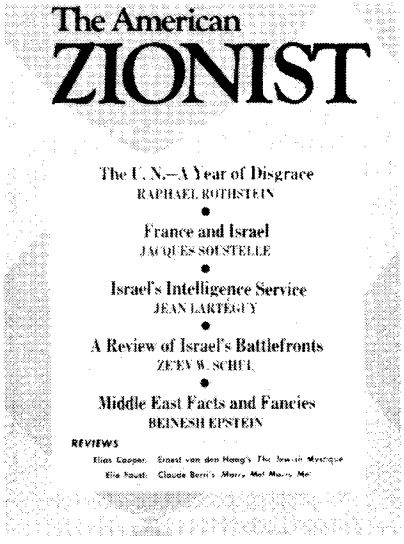

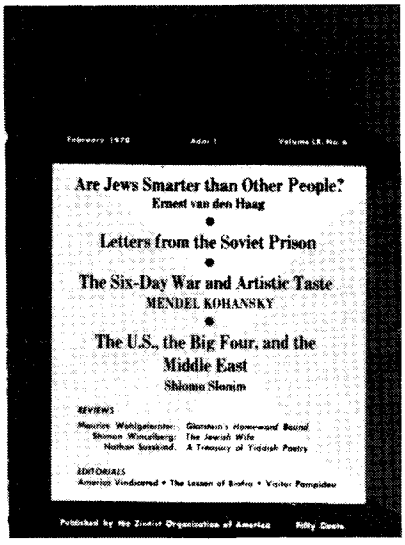
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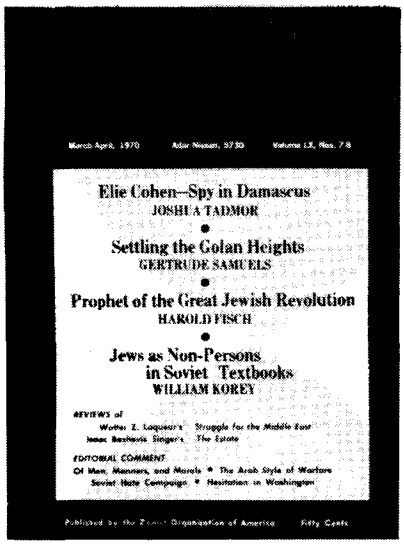

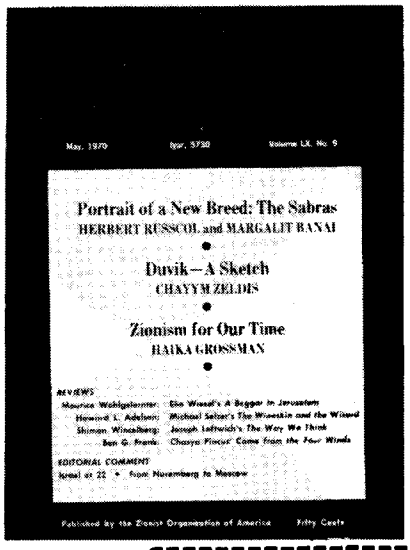
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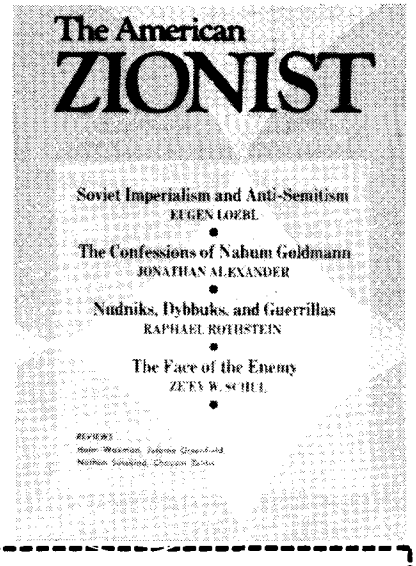

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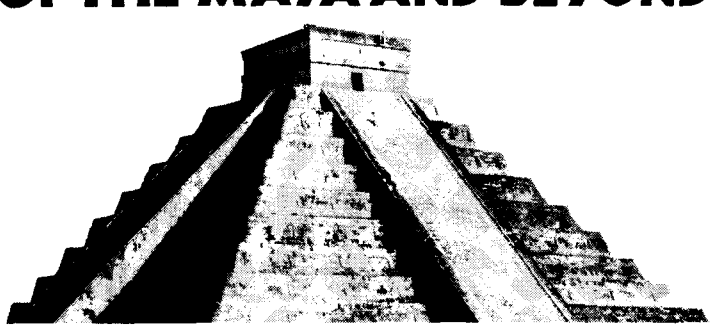

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the Arab states, the Palestinians, should they continue fighting, would have any hope of success. Of course not. But they can count on being able to wreck any peace arrangement entered into by the Arab states without their agreement, be it tacit or explicit. Despite their military weakness, the Palestinians have the power to veto any peaceful solution in the Middle East. The recent need of Israel to defend itself against the guerrillas in Jordan and Lebanon despite the cease fire entered into by both Egypt and Jordan clearly indicates that a peace without the Palestinians is unthinkable. The latest air hijackings and the war in Jordan point to the same conclusion.

I am at a loss to understand Mr. Abel's emotional outburst toward the end of his letter. Well, so he was never "drawn" to the early Zionists—who, may I ask, is being "drawn" to the Palestinians? The question is not whether one likes the Palestinians or not, but that they exist, that politically they are the most active of all the Arab communities and have it in their power to block any settlement. In plain language, this means that the Israelis must learn to live with them. For Israelis this is not a question of ideology or of attraction; it is an existential problem of the first magnitude.

Whatever view one may hold about Arab society—and I believe I was quite frank in my own discussion of Arab nationalism and the history of the Palestinian Arabs—the crux of the matter is that Israel and the Arabs must ultimately learn to coexist in peace. It was for the purpose of advancing this notion that I wrote my article. To carry on about how wrong the Palestinians are will not help matters at all. For decades Jews and Arabs have been picking at each other's faults, with such success that it is difficult now to find people in either community who can manage to preserve a balanced view of the other (though it should, in all fairness, be noted that the degree of misconception is, of course, not on the same level in both societies). The time has come for both sides to pay attention to each other. As Moshe Dayan said, in a passage which I quoted in my article, we have to listen to the voice of the Palestinians even if they won't listen to us, always hoping that the day will come when they will.

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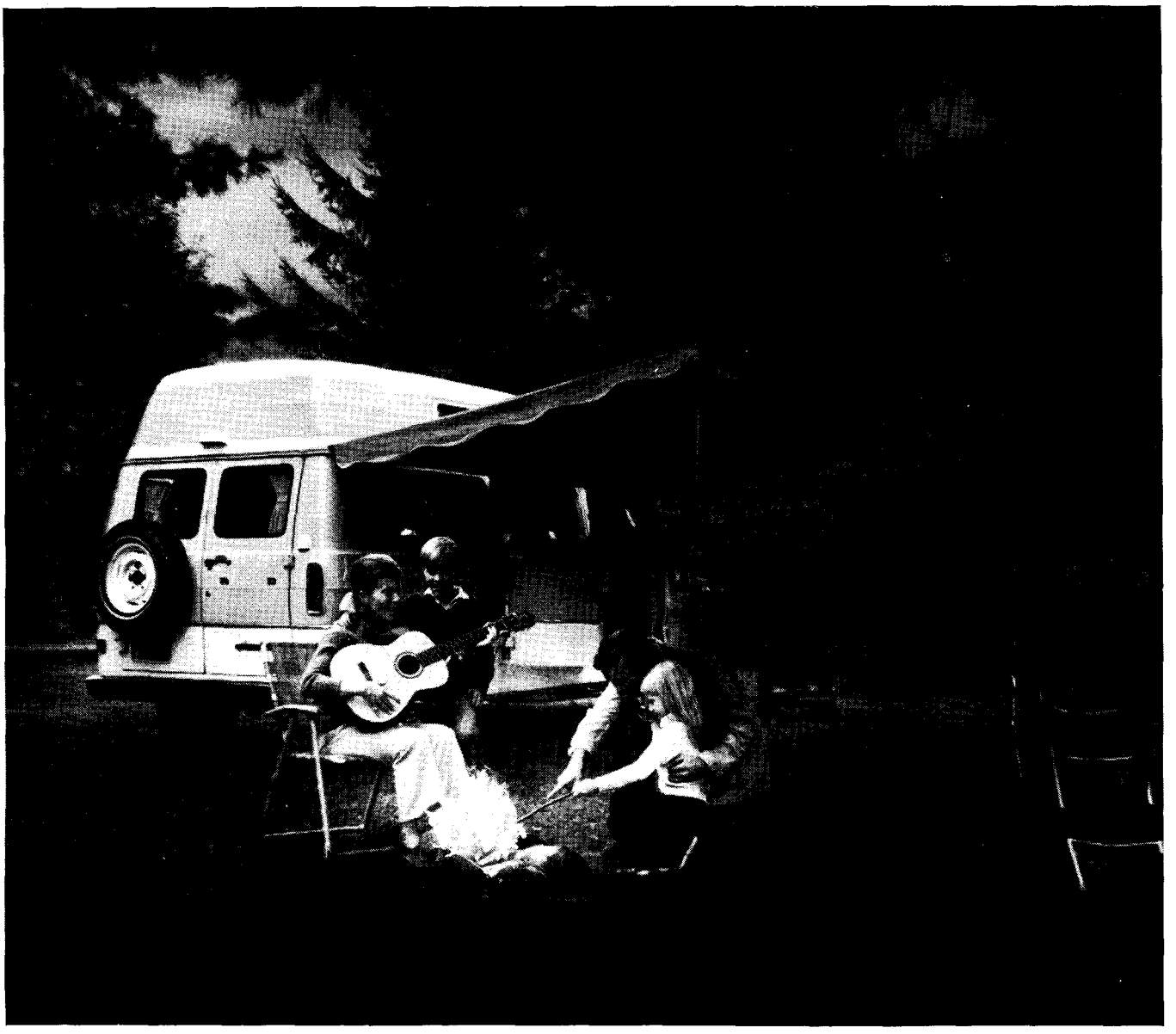

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THE FOLLOWING EXCHANGE *was occasioned by Irving Kristol's "Urban Civilization & Its Discontents" which appeared in July. Jerome Zukosky is working on a book on state and local government. Mr. Zukosky reviewed* Lindsay's Promise: The Dream that Failed *by Woody Klein in our September number.*

Is the Urban Crisis Real?

Jerome Zukosky

IN AN ESSAY, "Common Sense about the 'Urban Crisis'" (*Fortune,* October 1967), Irving Kristol, reviewing the work of a group of scholars, most of them at Harvard and MIT, praised them for their "tough-minded skepticism" toward the familiar "urban crisis." Mr. Kristol was at pains then, and since, in his capacity as co-editor of the quarterly, the *Public Interest,* to debunk the crisis syndrome as a way of perceiving problems and to point out the importance and utility of attending to the realities of how public problems are or can be solved by the application of intelligence, power, money, and effective organization. Each issue of the *Public Interest* has contained an estimable article of this kind, such as Larry E. Ruff's "The Economic Common Sense of Pollution" in the Spring 1970 number.

The "common sense" promoted by Mr. Kristol is a way of perceiving the nature of "problems" facing a democratic society that emphasizes "fact" as being closely related to the ordinary experience of individual citizens and their elected officials and holding generalization and public policy strictly accountable to it. Mr. Kristol was eager to indicate, in 1967, that when such facts are discerned, it will be seen that housing and transportation services, for instance, are actually better now for most urban citizens than in the past; in discussing this matter, he said pointedly, one should take care to separate fact from fancy.

How surprising, therefore, to find that in "Urban Civilization & Its Discontents" Irving Kristol has apparently abandoned once-solid ground and taken flight, so to speak, discovering in his new airy realm that not only is the "urban crisis" real but that it derives, *au fond,* from a lack of morals and civic virtue. Can this be the same Irving Kristol who sought to demonstrate that the "urban crisis" was an insubstantial construct (he called the term a "euphemism" in *Fortune*) based largely on fear (particularly of Negroes) and imprecision in public discussion and debate? Can actuality have changed that much in a mere flicker of historical time, or is Mr. Kristol's effort at the higher mysticism indicative of a change of heart which in and of itself has significance? If so, what does it portend?

THAT A remarkable change has occurred, Mr. Kristol leaves no doubt. If his writings have borne any lesson, it is that "issues that divide" people in a democracy are resolved through the ballot box and occasionally by force—a process that has little to do with ideas, including what Mr. Kristol now declares to be the "idea" of democracy. I am dubious of Mr. Kristol's present effort to make the "idea" of democracy as important as he now thinks it is. Let it be recalled that it was the *practice* of democracy that, prior to the Civil War, was considered compatible with slavery, just as it was also considered compatible with a limited suffrage and a great many other matters now regarded as inhumane or unfair.

The genius of American democracy is precisely its aversion to idealization, its capacity to make manifest its nature over time in definition and redefinition that enhances both it and the people who practice it. Mr. Kristol, I fear, has the relationships reversed: it is not the "precise meaning of the democratic dogma [that] can have the most material bearing on the kind of society we live in and the ways in which we live in it," but the other way around; it is life as it is lived in America that gives meaning to the dogma and from which any attempt to define it must proceed. Ideas in action, not action interpreted in the light of ideas—that is the formula. A complex one, to be sure, but it can be deciphered without running the risk of anti-intellectualism as, I believe, Charles Frankel proves in his superb essay, *The Democratic Prospect* (Harper & Row, 1962). There is no precise meaning to democracy as an "idea," and to suggest that there is one waiting to be discovered by those with the proper qualifications or perceptions is merely to give comfort to the new moralists of the Right and Left, who will have us believe that their transcriptions of the Ideal are the only true ones, while the rest of us must struggle as best we can with our severely tested faith in the democratic process.

No one, I think, can dispute Mr. Kristol's description of the civic virtues and public morality required of a democracy in good working order: self-reliant citizens who know their own interests and how to act on them through self-interest politics in behalf of larger interests we often call "the public

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interest," or the arrangements as described by Mr. Kristol through which those interests are defined and resolved, such as a political system in which power is widely diffused. Mr. Kristol's effort to promote acceptance of the human and public characteristics required is laudable. But I doubt if it is necessary to attach such characteristics to an older America and see contemporary society as a "new" one in which the "old" values are no longer operative or dominant and no longer relevant to the new society's main concerns.

Mr. Kristol calls his new society into being with such ease that one is constrained to protest. "The causes of this transformation," he writes, "are so obvious as to need no elaboration: one can simply refer in passing to the advent of the mass media and of mass higher education, and there isn't much more that needs to be said." I'm afraid there is a great deal more that needs to be said. By whatever name—Kristol's is "urban civilization"—the notion of a mass society is repugnant, and to invoke the mass society at a time when, in actuality, American society is becoming more highly diverse only serves to score a weak argumental point. If something called "higher education" is indeed a mass phenomenon now, I would glory in the fact; my own experience tells me that what Mr. Kristol apparently means by the phrase "mass higher education" is as variegated as "the mass media," and getting more so every day.

Mr. Kristol's main concern, however, would seem to be that most enlightened Americans today are behaving irrationally on matters of public interest, or, as he puts it, like an urban "mob." But what is his evidence? "The ways in which various strata of our citizenry," he writes, "are beginning to behave like a bourgeois urban mob are familiar to anyone who reads his newspaper, and I do not propose to elaborate upon them." I am afraid that elaboration is precisely what is required here too. Certainly Mr. Kristol cannot seriously mean that we are to take that extremely rarefied translation of reality, the daily newspaper (or the TV news show), as so substantial a mirror of society that it tells us more than what is the conventional wisdom of some editors at the moment? Only by making this ludicrous assumption can one state that there is "an apparent incapacity of our democratic and urban civilization to come to grips with the problems" we face. The editors of the New York *Times* may think that they are founts of wisdom and purveyors of "the record," but of all the people I can imagine who take such claims at face value, Irving Kristol would be one of the last. His reliance on such flimsy evidence strikes me as a mere negative conceit.

What Mr. Kristol does illuminate, however, is the mounting concern of many intelligent observers of contemporary events over the irrationality of the discussion of public affairs that one does indeed find in the mass media. I refer to the ever increasing politicization that has come to infect life and art—a condition that can be most unnerving, as George P. Elliott has so strikingly set forth in a personal memoir in, of all places, the *Public Interest* ("Revolution Instead—Notes on Passions and Politics," Summer 1970). Anyone contemplating the explosive impact of the modern sensibility of the absurd and its corrosive view of bourgeois traditions and pieties must have some unsteady moments; but I question whether fear is the proper response to Mr. Kristol's confusion between art and life, a distinction between reality as it is lived by most Americans and the more evanescent portrayal of it in the media or by assorted professional observers. Is the "crisis" all that bad, or is it made to seem so only by taking a much too narrow and self-regarding (i.e., an intellectual) view of affairs? The George Washington Bridge, the great interstate highways, television commercials are, after all, just as much the artful products of a democratic society as those works their creators call "art" and which professional observers thereof tell us *is* art. That does not make it so, however, although taking a more inclusive view requires a more robust faith in the workings of a democratic society and a more expansive feel for possibilities than that which Mr. Kristol evinces.

Is not Mr. Kristol making too much of what he sees as the confusion of intellectuals and rendering their confusion ours? He observes with some horror that among "the most thoughtful" there is a sore perplexity; that "among our political scientists," for example, there is great "uncertainty" over such matters as the proper organization of cities and that "our ideas about our cities are as unsettled and as uneasy as the cities themselves." But cities have always been "unsettled," and in all likelihood, a third-generation American, *circa* 1900, moving to "uptown" Manhattan to escape the swarming immigrants, was no less despairing of New York than many present-day residents. And since when were ideas of political scientists about cities so important? Anyone with a working knowledge of the output of such experts—and here I claim some professional expertise—must be impressed by the fact that their ideas have normally been not only "unsettled" but irrelevant or simply wrong and have generally been disregarded by most citizens—who study "government" little but practice it much more—and their elected officials. If there is a crisis, is it a matter of comprehension and of ideas, or is it grounded in the facts of life as they appear to human beings other than those concerned professionally with assessing the condition of contemporary Americans?

These are questions that can be taken down to the philosophical bedrock from which they spring, since Mr. Kristol poses the issue as a question with a substantial "if" in it: "If it is proper to say that we experience the crisis of our cities, it is equally proper to say that we are the urban crisis." Much depends upon the meaning given to the word "experience," an ontological problem that can be answered quite differently from the way Mr. Kristol assumes it can be answered and which, in any event, he did answer implicitly. It requires less speculation, however, to assert that one real problem to which Mr. Kristol addresses himself, that of drug abuse, is given an

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illusory answer. Of all the forces which a democratic society should muster to handle this problem, the flexing of moral muscles is perhaps the least helpful. Drug abuse presents a host of "problems" that demand the utmost clearheadedness. There is great need for expensive capital facilities to treat addicts, for equally expensive talent and for leadership in harnessing private organizations, resources, and incentive to deal with a complex, interrelated series of matters whose "public" shape is only just becoming clear. This includes defining the roles of local, state, and national government together with their regulatory and police powers and funds. Above all, what is involved here is the relationship of public power to private activities and interests of the most intimate kind. I for one much prefer a "tedious" approach, which seems to disgust Mr. Kristol, to public policymaking rooted in a firm grasp of the immorality of drug use and abuse.

All that Mr. Kristol is really asking for is a repetition of the response of the 1920's to a "problem"—the consumption of alcohol—that *was* taken as a moral issue and as the "ultimate subversive" challenge. It was met by the assertion of the most primitive and simplistic "No" that an aroused society, or an angry parent, could make—Prohibition. As a response, Prohibition was harmful to the public welfare in many ways, not the least being that it diverted and burned up energies which could have been put to far better use by a society whose attention to the realities of the public business was such that they were mismanaged with the most horrible consequences to real people.

We may indeed "solve" the "drug problem," or at least make it seem soluble by rendering it a moral issue; but I doubt if that is the kind of advice Americans now need, what with the present surfeit of crusaders who are looking to make the solution of public problems a matter of right belief in their moral visions of what is necessary to save the cities, or the planet, or humanity. Were Dr. Billy Graham the author of "Urban Civilization & Its Discontents," I would not be moved to criticize—but moralizing is not what I would expect from a tough-minded skeptic like Irving Kristol.

Irving Kristol

I SHOULD LIKE to thank Mr. Zukosky for his kind words about the *Public Interest*. I also wish I could go on to reassure him that there is no significant disagreement between us—but, alas, this is not to be. We are indeed at odds, in an important way. Before getting to what I feel to be the heart of the matter, however, I want to clarify a confusion that exists in Mr. Zukosky's mind, and no doubt for other readers as well, about my use of the word "urban."

For practically all of us, in ordinary discourse, "urban" means "city"—and, more often than not, big city. When President Johnson urged Congress to appropriate more money to help solve our "urban problems," he pointed out that the United States today was, in an unprecedented fashion, "a nation of cities," with some 70 per cent of the population living in "urban areas." What he did not mention was that his definition of "urban area," taken from the U.S. Census Bureau, was any community of more than 2,500 people. Ever since that famous speech, public discussion of "the urban crisis" has been in a state of utter confusion.

With regard to the specific problems of our major cities, Mr. Zukosky and I seem to be of one view, and "tough-minded skepticism" is a fair enough description. Most of these problems are either (a) easy of solution, (b) impossible of solution, (c) temporary and inevitable, (d) not "problems" at all but simply represent demands by a particular body of citizens upon the public purse for a reform or innovation dear to their hearts.

Thus, if one wants—as I want—to make the air and the water and the streets of New York cleaner than they are, it is easy to do: you raise taxes and spend the money to this end. (If you want cleaner streets and air and water but *don't* want to raise taxes, you are being all too human, in a childish way, and the issue becomes boring.) On the other hand, if you want a radical, total cure of pollution in New York City you are asking the impossible: to make the Hudson and East Rivers fit to swim in, New York City as a population center and a commercial metropolis would have to cease to exist.

Under temporary and inevitable problems, I would put the condition of our black citizens in our inner cities. The only genuine prospect for these people—whose sufferings I certainly do not mean to minimize—is their achieving enough job skills and education to move out, as other "new immigrants" to the city have done before them. It is reasonable to think that government programs can help them do this; but, in fact, the impact of such programs has been astonishingly small and has even frequently been perverse. Fortunately, our black citizens are not the helpless wards of the nation that many "concerned" whites so patronizingly take them to be. They are displaying considerable initiative and ingenuity, and the suburbanization of the working-class and middle-class Negro will surely be one of the major social phenomena of the 1970's. The credit for this achievement will belong to—and will, I trust, be claimed by—the Negroes themselves. This may deprive some of my liberal friends of the satisfaction they evidently obtain through strenuous exercise in the politics of guilt and compassion. But we can worry about that deprivation when we come to it.

As a "non-problem," one can identify the growing demand by the upper-middle classes in a city like New York for more imaginative architecture and planning, etc. I am in full sympathy with this demand, but one must candidly recognize that it represents the imposition of patrician—"elitist," if you will—ideals upon a democratic polity. Those public-housing monoliths are hideous and I would wish

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them out of existence. Still, they do represent the only known way of housing large numbers of poor people within the city, and it is therefore understandable that these poor people want to see more of them built. We thus have a clear conflict of interests rather than a general "problem" that anyone can magisterially "solve."

So much for the cities themselves, and I trust that I have made it clear to Mr. Zukosky that I am not at all apocalyptic about them. But my article was only in small part about cities. It was mainly about *urban civilization* in America today—a form of civilization that once would have been confined to large cities but is now pervading the entire nation. And here I must confess to suffering from an apocalyptic twinge or two. Moreover, I feel that Mr. Zukosky would experience them too, if only he could realize that enlightening as "tough-minded skepticism" is, it offers only a partial vision of things.

IF I had to single out one habit of mind as the curse of intellectual life in our times, I would choose the approach to social problems which prescribes that if we would understand what is happening to our society, we should look at the material circumstances in which we live. Among such material circumstances are levels of income, rates of unemployment, housing conditions, years of school attendance, rates of social mobility, the distribution of wealth, etc. From a study of all of these social conditions, it is assumed, one can understand the "causes" of human behavior, the *real* drift of events and probable shape of things to come. This assumption is, in my view, false and dangerously misleading.

Yes, to be sure in some ways conditions obviously influence and shape people. But it is also true that *conditions* may be seen as, and seized as, *opportunities* by men who are creators of history as much as creatures of it. In short: the ideas in men's heads are as important as the conditions under which they live. Just why some men, at some time, entertain a particular set of beliefs or ideas is not something we fully understand—which amounts to saying little more than that we don't fully understand ourselves. (Since we are only men, not gods, this is not at all astonishing.) But the fact that such ideas emerge and then change the world is what has prevented the study of history from being abolished in favor of sociology.

THE HABIT of mind I am referring to is so pervasive that indulgence in it becomes almost automatic on the part of anyone who talks about social problems. Mr. Zukosky is correct when he points out that, by all "objective" indices, the standard of living for practically all people in our cities has steadily improved over the past decades. But at the same time, the symptoms of social pathology—crime, delinquency, drug abuse, rioting, political extremism—have also risen. "Everyone knows" that, in order to cure these symptoms, you must attack "the cause": poverty, bad housing, inadequate job opportunities, and so on. Yet it is clear that what "everyone knows" isn't so: the behavior of people is not simply the consequence of such "causes." This is so vexing a state of affairs that the mere statement of it is quickly dismissed as a form of "higher mysticism," to use Mr. Zukosky's phrase.*

To take another striking instance: the upsurge of student radicalism during these past seven years, on an international scale, cannot adequately be accounted for by any set of "social conditions" or any constellation of "social causes." No one, studying the campuses of the late 50's or early 60's, could (or did) predict such a phenomenon. The students themselves did not anticipate it, as campus opinion polls prior to the Berkeley events of 1964 and the Columbia insurrection of 1968 reveal. Nevertheless, a Presidential commission has endeavored to ascertain "the causes" of student unrest and a great many commentators are ready to list them at the slightest provocation. What no one seems willing to say is that a number of young people in rather privileged or at least comfortable circumstances, growing up in a liberal, democratic, capitalist civilization, have decided they don't want any part of this civilization. That comes as something of a surprise—but history is made by such surprises. After all, to this day we do not comprehend the "conditions" and "causes" that made 16th- and 17th-century Englishmen decide that the inoffensive—as it appears to us—Church of England was an intolerable tyranny to be shattered by a violent Puritan revolution.

Now, it seems to be true beyond question that the urban civilization of the United States today is in deep trouble, and that this trouble derives more from the spiritual condition of the American people than from its material condition. I think our society is sick in spirit; and when I say "our society," I certainly wish to include the rebels against the society, who are in many ways sickest of all. I further think that this sickness of spirit issues in good measure from a vulgar and diseased set of ideas as to what democracy and liberty are all about—a set of ideas that is now conventionally accepted by common people, scholars, and Supreme Court justices alike, and which is inexorably destroying the bonds of civility that make for a civilized nation.

MR. ZUKOSKY is a materialist and a pragmatist—and I trust he will forgive me if I say that, in this respect, he is part of the problem. Such materialism and pragmatism are efficacious in analyzing the workings of social policies. They have only a limited usefulness in coping with spiritual turmoil. When basic questions—what kind of life shall we lead? what kind of society should we inhabit? what difference does anything make?—are being posed, technical answers are futile and irrelevant. Mr. Zukosky's response to the drug prob-

* For a real exercise in "the higher mysticism," one can turn to sociology itself, which tries to explain the fact that people may become more sullen and turbulent, even as their conditions improve, by reference to something called "the revolution of rising expectations." In plain English, this means that as people get more of what they want, they inevitably want ever more. This proposition makes nonsense of most sociological assumptions about human nature and, if taken seriously, would represent the ultimate argument against any kind of liberal politics. Fortunately, the proposition is as often false as true.

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lem is to build more clinics and hospitals. That is rather like responding to a mass epidemic of suicide by building more mortuaries. The analogy is not fortuitous, for the taking of drugs by many young people today is exactly a tentative kind of suicide; they know it, they do it, and our problem is to tell them why they shouldn't. Such an answer has to be moral and philosophical, not medical.

The conception of America as a "mass society" often has been a fiction of glib and self-serving intellectuals who think democracy is insufficiently appreciative of them. But I believe that, today, it is becoming an ominous reality. Oddly enough, these same intellectuals who were so eloquent fifteen years ago are now silent—the reason being that they have been absorbed into the new mass culture (the so-called "counter-culture") which now reigns supreme on our college campuses, in bohemia, and over a growing portion of our mass media. And the people who participate in this new mass culture are ever more inclined to think and act like a mob. Their example is contagious, and other sectors of the population are following suit. With each passing year, more and more Americans are merging together for "direct, mass action" on all sorts of issues. They think that such behavior is sanctioned by the idea of democracy, as they understand it and as they hear others propound it. Is it really so far-fetched, then, to see a connection between the debasement of our social sentiments and the degradation (as I would call it) of the democratic idea? Is it not something more than "higher mysticism" to believe that this is not the kind of situation that "tough-minded skepticism" can deal with?

In short, I do think that the "real" crisis in America today is largely—not entirely, of course, but largely—a moral-philosophical one, and that it cannot be dealt with simply by a "practical," pragmatic, matter-of-fact approach. This approach has its virtues, and I wish the state of the nation were such that these virtues were sufficient unto the day. But, regrettably, this does not seem to be the case.

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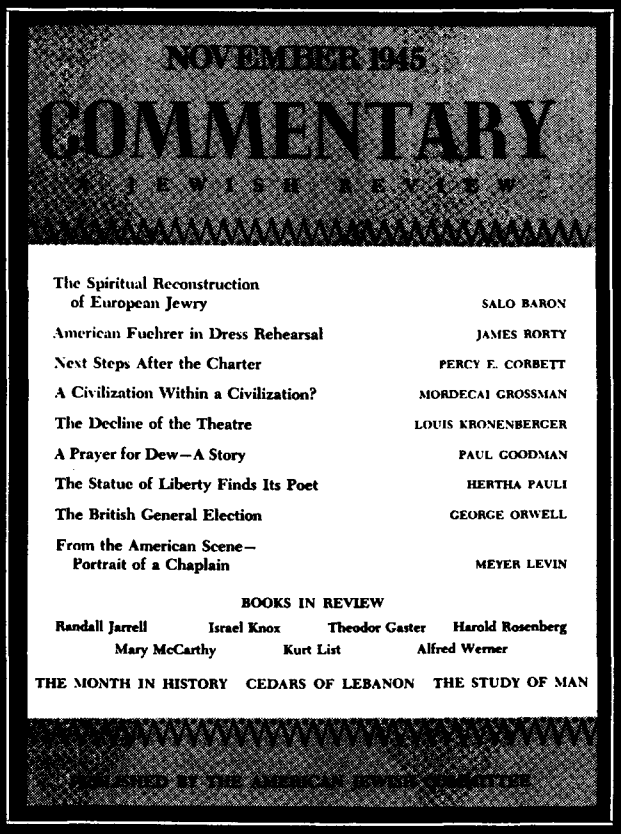
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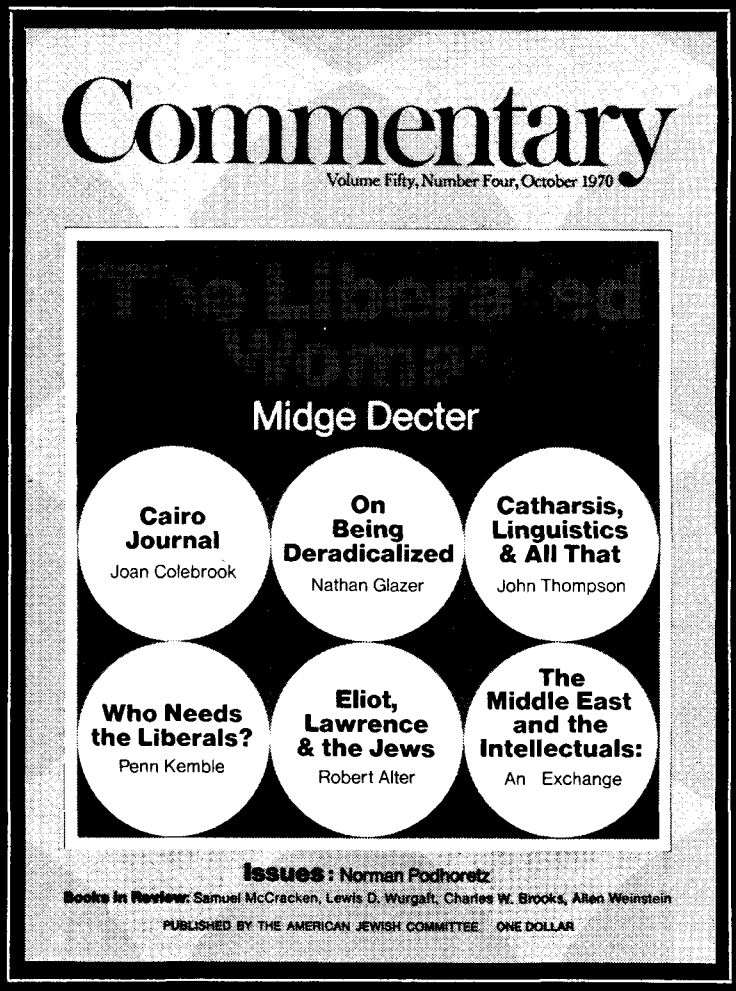

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The Case of the "New York Review"

Dennis H. Wrong

According to a current study of the politics of the "intellectual elites" in a number of countries, the four journals read most regularly by chairmen of humanities and social-science departments in the major American colleges and universities are the *New York Review of Books*, COMMENTARY, *Partisan Review*, and *Dissent*. An astounding tribute, this, to the apparent influence of the "New York intellectuals," since all of these journals are unmistakable products of the essentially non-academic New York milieu in which they originated. Of the four, the *New York Review* has in the seven years of its existence more and more come to be regarded as the most representative voice of that milieu, and indeed of the intellectual community in general, today more than ever concentrated in the academic world. The *New York Review* is also the most successful of the four, its circulation of close to 100,000 (40 per cent of it concentrated among teachers and graduate students) being about one-and-a-half times larger than that of COMMENTARY, and over ten times that of *Dissent* and *Partisan Review*. No other intellectual magazine, not even *Partisan Review* in its heyday during the late 40's, has ever achieved so widespread an acceptance in America or the prestige that goes with such acceptance.

Initially, the *New York Review* embodied the mood and concerns of the New York intellectual community at the end of the 50's. Its original aim was to communicate the style, critical standards, intellectual seriousness, and sophisticated liberalism of this world to a larger audience than that reached by COMMENTARY, *Partisan Review*, or *Dissent*. All three of the latter journals had been created between the late 30's and the middle 50's, and expressed in different ways the literary, political, and social concerns of the febrile, omnivorous, and argumentative New York intelligentsia. But *Dissent* was primarily political, striving to keep alive the sobered, anti-Stalinist socialist convictions of its editors; *Partisan Review* had become increasingly a journal of academic literary criticism; and COMMENTARY maintained a central interest in Jewish affairs. The editors of the *NYR* wished to avoid the limits on readership inevitably imposed by these specialized interests in order to compete effectively with such journals as the New York *Times Book Review* and the *Saturday Review*, long the most widely-read book-reviewing media, whose genial commercialism made them vulnerable to a more "advanced" and critically rigorous rival.

Launched in February 1963 at the time of a New York newspaper strike, which guaranteed it maximum attention, the *NYR* drew most of the contributors to its early issues from the New York intellectual "family" (as Norman Podhoretz has called it), including the founding editors of both *Partisan Review* and *Dissent*, several former editors of COMMENTARY, and an assemblage of poets, writers, and social commentators whose work had first appeared, or first been publicized, in these magazines. One reader, responding to the demonstration issue of the *NYR*, wrote a witty letter to the paper spoofing the ingrown professional, intellectual, and even marital and kinship ties shared by the editors, contributors, and authors of the books selected for review. "*Partisan Review* on butcher paper," someone jibed in the first few months of the new paper's existence.

But this initial coterie flavor was soon partially overcome. The *NYR* began to feature big literary "names" from outside the mental environs of New York—W. H. Auden, Edmund Wilson, Malcolm Muggeridge—and a growing number of its contributors were English: the *Times Literary Supplement* seemed to have become its model, rather than a more accessible *Partisan Review* for the growing academic legions. The reliance on English writers and scholars has remained evident to the present time, although with the politicization of the *NYR* it now resembles the *New Statesman* of the Kingsley Martin years more closely than the *TLS*. In fact, seven of the eleven contributors to the most recent issue before me as I write are English, although, significantly, the three pieces dealing with contemporary politics are by Americans.

The New York intellectuals were, of course, largely critics or creators of literature and the arts, or political journalists, most of them one-time radical ideologues. Their number included

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a few professors, mainly men who had found berths on the faculties of institutions in or near New York City. The *NYR* soon revealed a greater breadth and catholicity in the range of ideas and scholarship it dealt with than the journals with which so many of its editors and contributors had previously been associated, reflecting the expansion of higher education in the 60's and the continuing trend toward the centering of both critical and creative intellectual life in the university. For all its vigor and brilliance, the old *Partisan Review*, which served as a kind of graduate school far more exciting than the real one for so many of us, suffered from an often arrogant intellectual parochialism. I remember a friend, a recent *PR* graduate who had just joined the faculty, as it were, commiserating with me in 1954 over my impending return to my native city to teach at the University of Toronto because he was sure I would have no one to talk to there. (He did, I recall, suggest one possibility: a professor of English named Marshall McLuhan.) To a degree that was never matched by the old *Partisan Review*, the *NYR* discusses works of a difficult and technical nature in natural science, the psychology of learning, economics, analytical philosophy, theology, historical scholarship, and several other fields. Nowhere else in America can one acquire as easily as from the *NYR*'s long essay-reviews such quick and reliable summaries of the state of present knowledge on the causes of the Crusades, developments in contemporary evolutionary theory in biology, the elements of symbolic logic, or current trends in art criticism. No doubt this is a major reason why the editors have turned so often to England for contributors: English scholars have long been much better than Americans at the lucid and intelligent presentation of complex ideas and dense accumulations of knowledge—at the enterprise of *haute vulgarisation*.

THE *NYR*'s coverage of the American cultural scene has also been admirably broad. Back in 1952, Lionel Trilling complained (in *Partisan Review*) that American intellectuals knew nothing about the training of ministers and social workers, "the practice among the schools of the big cities," "just what is happening in psychology," the fate of Freud's ideas in the hands of the medical profession, or the content of college courses on marriage and sex. Much of this ignorance has been remedied by the *NYR*—to a fault, one might add, in the case of educational theory and practice, on which Trilling especially dwelled. One unanticipated but by no means unwelcome result has been that few of us today would care to affirm Trilling's conviction that "the literary mind, more precisely the historical-literary mind, seems to be the best kind of critical and constructive mind that we have, better than the philosophic, better than the theological, better than the scientific and the social-scientific."

Yet successful as the *NYR* has been in keeping abreast of the best in contemporary culture and scholarship, its achievement in this regard has been uneven. Apart perhaps from the authors of some of its political essays and journalism—which are to be my main subject here—it is hard to think of a single critic or writer whose reputation rests primarily on what he has published in the *NYR*, nor indeed of any who have won recognition as a result of the attention they have received in its pages. No doubt a few established reputations have been savaged, and perhaps a few hopeful comers have been shoved back or held down in relative obscurity; but that is another matter. Nearly all of the *NYR*'s regular contributors are middle-aged or older and were already well-known when the journal was founded; and the same can be said of the majority of the authors they have reviewed. The *NYR* has launched no promising young writers or critics, nor has it brought to the attention of a wider intellectual public very many established scholars who had not previously contributed to general cultural and intellectual periodicals in England or America. Although there have been drop-outs among the early contributors to the *NYR*—most of them, one readily surmises, for political reasons—the editors have continued to rely on a dozen or so men who have been regular contributors since the first few years of the journal and who reappear in issue after issue. Similarly the editors have often been spotty and arbitrary in their selection of specialized subject-matter, omitting much that might have been treated—the spreading influence of phenomenology in American philosophy and social science, for instance; or Noam Chomsky's linguistics as opposed to his political writing; or new approaches to the study of deviance in sociology—to mention only a few examples that come immediately to mind.

These failures need not be seen as evidence of the "cliquishness" and "in-group back-scratching" so often alleged by critics of the *NYR*. American intellectuals and academics are now more numerous and more widely dispersed across the country than ever before, and their work appears in an enormous variety of journals and publishing outlets. New York still occupies a commanding position in American intellectual life, but to an even lesser extent than in the past is it the headquarters of a national intellectual elite or "Establishment" comparable with London and Paris in English and French culture. Thus a journal with the far-reaching aims of the *NYR* is bound to fall short of its goals and to inspire rival complaints of catering to a small, localized coterie on the one hand, and of publishing too many big-name writers and foreigners on the other.

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In the last few years, however, the political stance of the *NYR* has lent greater justice to charges of unrepresentativeness. While it is still looked upon as the political voice of the intellectual community, the *NYR* has become, in effect, a vehicle of what might be called *haut* New Leftism. Comparisons with Kingsley Martin's *New Statesman* are almost unavoidable, or—closer to home but in other ways less apt—with the *Nation* in the late 30's and early 40's when Freda Kirchwey was editor and Margaret Marshall ran "the back of the book."

One can hardly blame the *NYR* for turning so sharply toward politics and even active political engagement considering the cultural situation of the 60's. Politics was where the action was and the editors wanted a piece of the action. I would not go so far as Richard Hofstadter and describe the 60's as the "Age of Rubbish," but few new writers emerged during the decade, let alone new culture-heroes for intellectuals, and few new ideas stimulated debate and polemics. In fact, one often observes a split between the cultural and political sides of the *NYR*: literary products of the swinging "new sensibility" are vigorously criticized—see, for example, the recent dismissal of Kurt Vonnegut and earlier reviews of Andy Warhol and the Living Theater—while silence is maintained toward the more idiotic slogans of the New Left, or they are sympathetically interpreted as expressions of a new "life style" not to be taken too literally—see Stanley Diamond and Edward Nell on the New School sit-in (*NYR*, June 18, 1970). (Does anyone recall that Max Weber is the source of the term "life style" that has become such a tiresome cliché?) Periods of political turmoil, activism, and uncertainty are not usually marked by intense intellectual creativity. The contrast between the 20's and the 30's is comparable with that between the 50's and the 60's. The 50's are now thought of as a dull, sterile, reactionary decade, which to a great extent they were politically, but not necessarily intellectually—the 20's, after all, were similarly regarded until after World War II. Even the distinctive themes of New Left protest were first advanced in the 50's by C. Wright Mills, Herbert Marcuse, Paul Goodman, and others, and they have undergone little development or elaboration since—rather the reverse in recent years.

With the exception of the work of the revisionist historians, some of which has been printed and reviewed in the *NYR*, no body of new scholarship in the humanities and social sciences inspired by the New Left has yet appeared. In my own field, sociology, radicals have largely confined themselves to denunciatory rhetoric directed against Parsonian functionalism, the "end-of-ideology" writers, theories of political and social pluralism, and other points of view ascendant in the 50's, while extolling as alternatives, but not emulating, the work of Mills and, of all unlikely people, Pitirim Sorokin, both of whom are dead. One recent exception to the emptiness of radical theorizing is Alvin W. Gouldner's *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*, but Gouldner is fifty, his intellectual roots stem from the Old Left, and he is always finding himself compelled to dampen the rhetoric of the younger radicals by reminding them of how much they owe to the very "academic sociology" they excoriate.

Understandably, then, the *NYR* turned early in its existence to political journalism and commentary. Nine months after it came into being, President Kennedy was assassinated, and the editors made their first major departure from straight book-reviewing in running a symposium on the reactions of leading American intellectuals to his death. Since then we have been overwhelmed by a succession of unanticipated and often unprecedented political events, most of them violent and disastrous: the capture of the Republican party by its extreme Right wing in the 1964 election; the Johnson administration's intervention in the Dominican Republic and escalation of the war in Vietnam in 1965; large-scale rioting in the black ghettos of major American cities between 1965 and 1968; student revolts against the universities led by New Left radicals, from Berkeley in late 1964 through 1970; the insurgent Presidential candidacies of McCarthy and Robert Kennedy, the assassinations of King and Kennedy, and police attacks on young demonstrators at the Chicago Democratic Convention in 1968; abroad there was the Six-Day Arab-Israeli War in 1967, the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, and through the entire last half of the decade the miserable, endless war in Vietnam arousing an equally endless succession of protests and demonstrations against it by the Left. Small wonder that the *NYR* has turned increasingly to essays and reporting on these events which have so shadowed our lives, advertised them in large colored type on its cover, along with David Levine's hideous caricatures of politicians, and featured them prominently within the journal, often as the lead articles or as "special supplements."

Vietnam became, and remains, the most frequent subject of the *NYR*'s political journalism. In attacking forthrightly the deepening American involvement in the spring of 1965, the *NYR* undoubtedly helped to mobilize intellectuals against the war, especially through the reports on Vietnam itself by Jean Lacouture and the late Bernard Fall, and on policy formation in Washington by Hans J. Morgenthau, Joseph Kraft, and Theodore Draper (all of whom, to be sure, were writing on Vietnam in other magazines, including of course Commentary, as well). From the

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time of the ill-fated White House Arts Festival in the spring of 1965, the *NYR* also rallied leading writers and intellectuals to engage in active protest against the war through petitions, demonstrations, and campaigns of civil disobedience.

But by 1966 and 1967 a new tone of extravagant, querulous, self-righteous anti-Americanism began to creep into the *NYR*'s reports on Vietnam, especially those of Noam Chomsky, Mary McCarthy, and I. F. Stone. The war seemed increasingly to provide the occasion for an extreme and bitter repudiation, marked by an unmistakable touch of *Schadenfreude*, of a great deal more in American life than the Johnson administration's foreign policy, the Pentagon, the military-industrial complex, and the wretched clichés of cold-war propaganda. An especially bizarre sign of the direction in which the paper was moving was the publication in the summer of 1966 of a long supplement by Richard Popkin attacking the Warren Report and advancing an ingenious but far-fetched theory of a successful conspiracy to assassinate President Kennedy. For a couple of issues the letters columns were virtually taken over by the then-active Kennedy assassination "buffs," each advancing his own—often sound—criticisms of the Warren Report and advocating his preferred version of a right-wing conspiracy. In the fall of 1967, the *NYR* featured an article by Popkin entitled "The Case for Garrison." But since the total collapse of James Garrison's case in a New Orleans courtroom, the *NYR* has dropped the entire subject of the assassination, perhaps because so many of its readers no longer require persuasion by rational argument of the possibility of a politics of conspiracy and murder in the United States.

THE *NYR*'s short-lived concern with conspiracy theories of John Kennedy's assassination may, however, be of more than merely symptomatic significance. It has become a journalistic platitude to date the internal troubles of the present—the loss of confidence in American institutions and the spreading tolerance of incivility and violence—to the impact of the assassination on the American people. This, I think, is largely sentimental nonsense, but it has truly been an extraordinary piece of bad luck that the United States should have suffered at this historical moment the successive Presidencies of two such men as Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon, both of them "accidental" Presidents, the latter on the—sound, I believe—assumption that Robert Kennedy would have won the Democratic nomination and the 1968 election had he too not been assassinated. I remember predicting in a gloomy mood back in the 50's that the 1960 Presidential election might confront us with an impossible choice between Nixon and Johnson, but never, even at my most pessimistic, could I or anyone have foreseen that we would get both of them in succession.

In any case, I recall a conversation a few months after President Kennedy's death with a well-known New York intellectual who was then on intimate terms with the *NYR* editors and their immediate circle, although he has since broken with them on political grounds. He expressed vehement indignation at the popular idea that European-style political assassinations simply did not and could not occur in America, that it was so quickly and easily taken for granted that the deed *must* be that of a lone psychotic. Why does no one even think of asking "*cui bono*," he insisted, and at least suggested the most obvious answer—the Vice President and his allies? I sympathized with his argument, though doubting its relevance to the actual facts of the President's murder of which, to be sure, he took an admittedly speculative view.

This incident indicates the mood of disbelief in the pieties of official America prevalent among intellectuals in the early 60's, a mood which was as yet lacking any definite focus. The Vietnam war provided the focus. Nearly a decade later, there is a sense in which the entire experience of the 60's can be seen as the belated Europeanization of American politics: the emergence of a large, disaffected left-wing intelligentsia in league with a rebellious student movement; an ominous increase in the autonomy and political initiative of the military and the police; a sharpening of divisive ethnic emotions sparked by the long-overdue assertiveness of the Negroes; and an atmosphere of heightened, violence-prone ideological conflict. These developments scarcely hold the society totally in their grip—American democracy is still much more stable than Weimar Germany or even the Third and Fourth French Republics—but they are unlikely now to be entirely effaced or reversed by the ending of the Vietnam war or the easing of racial tensions.

THE *NYR* turned unmistakably toward the New Left in the closing months of 1966 and throughout 1967. In September 1966 the editors gave top billing on the cover to an article by Stokely Carmichael attacking "white liberals," demanding to know whether they were "capable of the shame which might become a revolutionary emotion," and referring in passing to the "exploitation [of blacks] by Jewish landlords and merchants." This was Carmichael's only appearance in the *NYR* and could be dismissed as no more than a cashing in on the publicity value of a newsworthy personality, for Carmichael was the creator of the new slogan "black power." But in the next few months regular contributors began to move beyond the Vietnam war to reject a wider range of liberal attitudes and spokesmen: Christopher Lasch criticized contemporary liberal anti-Communist views of the 30's, and I. F. Stone

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in a three-part series reviewed the flawed record of Senator Fulbright, then emerging as the leading dove in Washington. In February 1967 Noam Chomsky appeared for the first time with his now-famous address, "The Responsibility of Intellectuals," in which he blamed the war not only on liberal intellectuals like Walt Rostow and McGeorge Bundy who were policymakers in the Johnson administration, but also on—among others—Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. and Daniel Bell, both critics of the war and one-time contributors to the *NYR* itself.

ONE is tempted to regard Jason Epstein's essay "The CIA and the Intellectuals" (*NYR*, April 20, 1967) as a turning-point in the relation of the *NYR* to the New York intellectual milieu out of which it grew, if only as an explicit statement of the direction in which the paper was already tending. (This article in part inspired COMMENTARY's 1967 symposium on "Liberal Anti-Communism Revisited.") Epstein began by describing the political boundaries of the New York intelligentsia in the late 40's and early 50's. Essentially the same story has been told by Norman Podhoretz in *Making It* and by Irving Howe in "The New York Intellectuals: A Chronicle and a Critique" (COMMENTARY, October 1968), and the "future Proust of Manhattan's Upper West Side" foreseen by Epstein will find all three accounts invaluable primary sources, including the different perspectives from which their authors look back upon their experience. The main purpose of Epstein's account, however, was political rather than historical like Howe's or biographical like Podhoretz's. His aim was to show how the anti-Stalinism which was the common heritage of the New York intellectuals led some of their number to so close an identification with American cold-war policies that they were ready and willing to serve unquestioningly as spokesmen for American democracy at conferences of intellectuals abroad and in foreign publications subsidized by the CIA.

Politically, the point of Epstein's essay was to extol the position of the Left faction that had begun to emerge within the New York intelligentsia in the late 50's as against the Right faction for whom "the ghost of Stalin, already an ember in his obscure grave, was still more present than the flesh and blood of America's increasingly arrogant and aggrandizing recklessness." Epstein proclaimed, in fact, the historical vindication of the Left faction as a result of the urban crisis in the United States, by an America which he accused of "fouling its landscapes, poisoning the streams and skies, trivializing the education of its children," and, most of all, by the war in Vietnam and the revelations of CIA funding of cultural projects that were the occasion for his article. (Oddly, he scarcely mentioned the plight of the blacks.) If "it seemed absurd fifteen years ago to dismiss the threat of Soviet aggression," this was no longer the case, and the corrupting influence of the CIA possessed the same significance for contemporary intellectuals that the Communist party had had for an earlier generation, while the moral repulsiveness of the Vietnam war could be similarly equated with that of Stalinism.

Epstein carefully avoided any assessment of differences in the objective historical importance of these two sets of events, but—as I shall indicate later—he came close to the truth in endowing them with equal significance in the experience of American intellectuals. His indictment of America was marked by the anti-bourgeois, aesthetic overtones characteristic of a certain literary tradition, as in his stress on the ugliness and pollution of the environment, the inadequacies of education, and the crassness of "familiar philistine expansionism" as "the middle class grunted its way upward." Reading Epstein's article at the time of its appearance three years ago, one wondered where the logic of its anti-Americanism would lead him—and the *NYR*. His own reaction to a famous article by Irving Kristol which seemed to "carry the logic of anti-Stalinism to its utmost point" was apposite. One felt impelled to ask Epstein and the *NYR*, as he reported he had once been moved to wonder about the anti-Stalinism of Kristol and his supporters, whether there were any consequences of the current "radicalization" of the young and the intellectuals "which he or they might ultimately find intolerable." Epstein's conclusion that this "was an interesting question and one still awaits the answer" is no less appropriate to the anti-Americanism of the 60's than it was to the anti-Communism of the 50's.

Certainly in the months following the publication of Epstein's article there seemed to be few if any manifestations of contemporary radicalism that the *NYR* was not prepared to tolerate. It was as if Chomsky's jeremiads against the experts and "policy scientists" in the universities, on the one hand, and Epstein's repudiation of the past positions of the New York highbrows, on the other, had removed all barriers, released all inhibitions. In the spring of 1967 Andrew Kopkind, a young journalist previously associated with *Time* and then the *New Republic*, began to write regularly for the *NYR*, urging his readers to reject the "illusions of reform" offered by Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, warning that Kennedy was becoming a "cult hero" with a powerful appeal to "the near-New Left," and, with a rhetorical display of mock heroics, exhorting left-wing intellectuals to "remain outside" and become a "saving remnant" since Kennedy's programs "will not remake the society" (*NYR*, June 1, 1967).

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In August of that same year, just after the Newark and Detroit riots, there appeared the famous issue of the *NYR* with the diagram on the cover showing how to make a Molotov cocktail as a visual accompaniment to the announcement of articles by Kopkind and Tom Hayden on the theme of "Violence and the Negro." The drawing has often been regarded as a put-on, a Dadaist *jeu*, but turning the page one finds that the opening words of the issue are: "The Movement is dead; the Revolution is unborn. The streets are bloody and ablaze. . . ." Their author was Kopkind, ostensibly reviewing a book by Martin Luther King whom he proceeded to patronize as an amiable, ineffectual, do-gooding relic of the past. Kopkind went on to announce with obvious satisfaction that "it is not a time for reflection, but for evocation. The responsibility of the intellectual is the same as that of the street organizer, the draft resister, the Digger: to talk *to* people, not *about* them. The important literature now is the underground press, the speeches of Malcolm, the works of Fanon, the songs of the Rolling Stones and Aretha Franklin . . . the duty of a revolutionary is to make revolutions . . . and King made none." A few paragraphs later he declared that "Morality, like politics, starts at the barrel of a gun"—perhaps the most offensive and offending sentence ever to have appeared in the *NYR*. With the issue of August 24, 1967 the *NYR* had in four years come a long way from its beginnings as an organ of high culture and liberal humanism.

The *NYR* did not, however, subsequently become an extension of the underground press. The Molotov cocktail drawing and Kopkind's characterization of morality drew wide criticism, much of it voiced in the *NYR*'s own letters columns. The suggestions of "Might is right" and "When I hear the word culture, I reach for my revolver" in Kopkind's statement did not escape notice. His phrase might have attracted less attention if, instead of echoing Mao, he had merely quoted Thrasymachus's "Justice is the interest of the stronger," which is literally what he meant, though his disdain for King's ethic of nonviolence and his lyrical exultation over the revolutionary potential of the riots, in sharp contrast to Hayden's more realistic first-hand appraisal in the same issue, carried more sinister implications of advocacy. In any case, one detected a certain drawing back from total and open identification with the revolutionary romanticism of the New Left in later issues of the *NYR*. Like Stokely Carmichael before him, Hayden disappeared from the paper, though a year-and-a-half later the *NYR* printed a self-indulgent tirade by Jerry Rubin, apparently following a policy of occasionally publishing bombastic pronouncements by New Left "activists" popular on the campus while continuing to rely on older, established intellectual figures for the bulk of its political reporting. (Credit should be given where credit is due, and the *NYR* deserves some for, unlike *Partisan Review*, never having opened its pages to those two *doyens* of swinging radical journalism, Jack Newfield and Nat Hentoff.) Even Kopkind, after contributing a double-talking apologia for the comic opera New Politics Conference in Chicago in the fall of 1967, ceased to write as often for the *NYR* thereafter.

But the *NYR* in no sense retreated from its previous political line in choosing to present it in more nuanced and discriminating versions. In October 1967 Philip Rahv compared an anthology from *Dissent* edited by Irving Howe with a book by two New Left spokesmen as differing expressions of American radicalism. Quoting approvingly Kopkind's earlier strictures on King, he was critical of "the used-up formulas of the Old Left as exemplified by [Michael] Harrington and Howe, who are obviously drifting toward Social-Democratic positions of a specifically American sort." Howe replied a month later, and the readers of the *NYR* were treated to the spectacle of a full-scale debate replete with the old marxistical fire and dash between a founding editor of *Partisan Review* and a founding editor of *Dissent*, which, like Dwight Macdonald's *Politics* a decade earlier, had been created in the early 50's to reaffirm the socialist outlook increasingly abandoned by *Partisan Review* during World War II and the subsequent cold war. Now Rahv was attacking from the Left, and Howe quoted back at him his past political pronouncements while Rahv retaliated in kind. Howe jibed at the fashionable radicalism of the *NYR* and pointed out that, despite Rahv's revival of a familiar Marxist vocabulary, he himself expressed his disbelief in the revolutionary possibilities of the proletariat or any of the favored New Left candidates for its traditional mission, which reduced his radicalism to nothing more than a species of attitudinizing.

There have been few political confrontations such as this one in the *NYR*. If its cultural range has been wider than that of the old *Partisan Review*, it has failed to provide anything like the exchanges among Sidney Hook, Dwight Macdonald, James Burnham, and the editors, Rahv and William Phillips, which were a mainstay of the old *PR*. These debates often seemed interminable, hairsplitting, and entered into with a polemical fervor out of proportion to the issues dividing the participants, but they provided an education in theory and the nature of political argument for which the journalism of the *NYR*, let alone the self-preening moralism of some of its political writers, is no substitute.

After the exchange with Rahv, Irving Howe appeared only once more in the *NYR* with a pro-McCarthy statement in the spring of 1968 when the *NYR* shifted back briefly to a more ecumenical mood in response to the Presidential candidacies

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of McCarthy and Kennedy. After having later in the year enlarged in COMMENTARY upon some of the criticisms of the *NYR* itself he had first made in the exchange with Rahv, Howe was dropped altogether as a contributor, although he had previously been one of the *NYR*'s most frequent critics of the Vietnam war and a leading strategist of the protest movement against it.

THE DIVISION, to which the dropping of Howe pointed, between the *NYR* and its former friends of the Old Left was deepened by its treatment of two local New York City events in 1968: the Columbia student revolt in the spring, and the teachers' strike in the fall arising out of the dispute between the teachers' union and the governing board of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville school district. In the course of several heated exchanges Dwight Macdonald mustered his polemical skills in support of the students in the one conflict and the local school board in the other—although, especially with regard to Columbia where he was on the defensive, his famous talent for the witty deflation of cant seemed to wear a little thin, degenerating into mere flippancy and feeble late Shavian frivolity. The *NYR*'s general coverage of Columbia, however, in well-informed articles by F. W. Dupee and Allan Silver, was more valuable, despite the fact that the paper did not report the more destructive and violent currents already evident in the student movement (an omission in its coverage of campus disturbances which had become altogether characteristic by 1970).

The school strike posed even more abrasive issues in pitting traditionally liberal forces against each other: trade unions and a large segment of the Jewish community on one side, spokesmen for ghetto blacks and educational reformers on the other. Ocean Hill grew into such a mountain—or ocean—of briefs and counter-briefs, motive-mongering and imputations of conspiracy, that no short summary of the conflict is possible. Whatever the whole truth may have been about the complex issues involved in the school strike, the *NYR*'s commentators stood squarely for community control, decentralization, and the colonialist view of the blacks in the city slums, and minimized the importance of the anti-Semitism of some black leaders, displaying an insensitivity to specifically Jewish interests on this, as on other matters, which has been so marked as to suggest calculated indifference. In short, the *NYR* treatment of the Ocean Hill controversy, though argued in specific and sometimes convincing empirical terms, was supportive in general of New Left sentiments on trade unions, black power, public bureaucracies, official liberalism, and—implicitly—the concerns of Jews.

IN THE past two years the *NYR*'s political outlook has not only remained the same but has become thoroughly predictable. On Vietnam and Indochina the editors have relied more and more exclusively on Chomsky's long, heavily documented exposés of American misdeeds in which enormously detailed descriptions of local situations in Vietnam, Laos, or Cambodia are interspersed with far-reaching generalizations and sweeping, unqualified declarations of the total moral corruption of American policymakers and those scholars and intellectuals who maintain any sort of advisory relation to them. I. F. Stone continues month after month to record the efforts of Pentagon officials to expand the arms budget and undermine all disarmament negotiations. There have been long accounts, sympathetic to the protesters, of campus disturbances and demonstrations where police provocation has played a major role, as at Berkeley and the State University of New York at Buffalo, or where students, faculty, and even administrators have presented the appearance of unity, as at Yale and Princeton, but silence has been preserved on institutions such as Harvard, Cornell, and Wisconsin where radical or black students have taken actions for ephemeral reasons with divisive effects on the rest of the student body and the faculty. Murray Kempton has been a kind of roving reporter for the *NYR*, covering Washington demonstrations, the Black Panthers, the Mafia, and sundry other topics with his typical mixture of *Weltschmerz*, heavy irony, and the arrogance of proclaimed humility.

The journalism often consists of personal evocations of the scene in Hanoi or Washington or Oakland, more disciplined and less self-indulgent than the kind of piece that appears in the *Village Voice*, just as the muckraking is less strident and defamatory than similar material that appears in *Ramparts*. But there is little theoretical analysis or ideological statement going beyond simple moral assertion. No doubt this is by design, for the editors appear to be shrewd judges of their heterogeneous constituency. Having participated, moreover, in one major change in the political temper of the university and intellectual communities, they are careful not to climb too far out on a limb against the possibility of yet another. Campus and black radicals are thrown the odd sop in the occasional publication of a message or exhortation from Carmichael, Hayden, Rubin, Michael Rossman from jail, or, most recently, Daniel Berrigan from "the American Underground." But the *NYR* continues to publish the old Weimarians —Hannah Arendt, Walter Z. Laqueur, George Lichtheim, and Hans J. Morgenthau—to whom so many of us owe a debt for our awareness that politics is fate and that the density of history surrounds all our present acts and choices. They have also published valuable essays on American society and the university, critical of both contemporary radicalism and official liberalism. Yet

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these efforts invariably come from writers—such as Paul Goodman, Barrington Moore, Jr., Eugene Genovese, Christopher Lasch, and Robert Heilbroner—who were identified with the New Left in the past and are still widely perceived on the campus as "radicals" and sympathizers of "the Movement." With the exception of an occasional eminence like Lichtheim or Theodore Draper, writers and scholars, whether liberal, conservative, or socialist, who have been outspokenly critical of the New Left in other periodicals or who have prominently opposed the *NYR*'s position on particularly sensitive issues like the New York school strike or the Berkeley and Columbia revolts, no longer appear in the journal, although their number includes many former contributors.

SOME ROUGH STATISTICS are in order: of the 43 contributors to the extra-large first issue, 21 of the Americans, whatever their primary disciplines, write frequently on political and social subjects (I have omitted from this total one *NYR* editor and one contributor who died soon afterward). If we drop six names that no longer appear in the *NYR* for reasons almost certainly having nothing to do with politics (Norman Mailer and Susan Sontag are among them), we are left with a list of 15. Eight of these, or more than half, have not published in the *NYR* over the past three years or more. All of them have been critics of the New Left and of student radicals and have written for journals (like this one) that have featured such criticism.* Another test: of 11 American contributors (omitting two who wrote for the *NYR* only on this single occasion) to the *NYR*'s symposium on John Kennedy's assassination, the journal's first break with printing anything but ostensible book reviews, seven no longer appear in its pages, all having elsewhere criticized political positions favored by the editors.†

The political subjects the editors choose to deal with in articles, as well as those they do not, reveal considerable canniness, which extends, though much less consistently, to their choice of books for review. Their coverage of the Soviet occupation of Czechoslovakia was adequate, although they did not discuss the liberalization under Dubcek until after the Soviet invasion. While I have no sympathy at all with people who complain that radicals should balance every negative judgment of the United States with a comparable criticism of the Communist countries —after all, America is where they live—I find it equally unnecessary for Ronald Steel to spend several opening paragraphs of a report from Prague drawing parallels between American interventions in Cuba and the Dominican Republic and the Soviet suppression of Czech freedom (*NYR*, September 26, 1968). The *NYR* has, of course, avoided the fatuity, not to say blasphemy, of mentioning Chicago in the same breath with the Nazi camps and the Soviet purges, a standard rhetorical equation in much of the radical press. But except for Czechoslovakia, the *NYR* has paid little attention to Eastern Europe, even though, despite the New Left mystique of Third World figures like Mao, Ho, Fidel, and Che, the experience of Sovietized Europe suggests more lessons with some application to industrial societies than that of any of the underdeveloped countries. (I am in total accord with such *NYR* writers as Conor Cruise O'Brien and Christopher Lasch on the irrelevance as a model for our domestic politics of the entire Third World.)

THE *NYR* has actually printed only *one* discussion of the Middle East crisis. That was a review by I. F. Stone just after the Six-Day War (*NYR*, August 3, 1967) sharply critical of the Israeli position, which evoked a vigorous response from those who remembered that Stone had once held quite different views of Israel back in 1948 when the state was established with strong Russian support, and when Stone was a Stalinist fellow-traveler (though it's considered dirty pool to recall such things today). Since then silence has reigned in the *NYR* on the subject of Arab-Israeli relations. Chomsky writes voluminously on Southeast Asia, but expresses himself on the Middle East in other journals where he argues an anti-Zionist point of view sympathetic to the claims of Al Fatah and the Palestinian Arab nationalists. In fact, no fewer than nine contributors to the *NYR* are listed among the 24 sponsors of the Committee on New Alternatives in the Middle East, the first action of which was to organize a speaking tour for a leader of the tiny Israeli Maoist group, who characterized Israel as a "National Socialist" (i.e., Nazi) state guilty of racism and imperialism and advocated its dissolution. Since the New Left student groups and the black militants are fervidly pro-Arab, while a larger segment of the liberal-left academic world still supports Israel, one suspects that the *NYR* editors find it politic to avoid the subject.

The letters columns of the *NYR* in the last few years reveal the extent to which the journal has become a communications center for Left initiatives and the airing of the complaints of self-styled victims of "repression" in the universities. Nearly every issue contains a petition or letter of protest with multiple signers, ranging from appeals for funds to support the trial costs of war resisters, to demands by a group of old

* Their names: Lionel Abel, David Bazelon, Lewis Coser, Midge Decter, Oscar Gass, Nathan Glazer, Irving Howe, Dennis Wrong.

† In addition to Bazelon and Howe from the first list, they are: Benjamin DeMott, Richard Hofstadter, David Riesman, Richard Rovere, and C. Vann Woodward.

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CP members and fellow-travelers for American recognition of the Ulbricht regime. The *NYR*, wisely from its standpoint, did not report on the debacle at San Francisco State, but its letters columns have been full of bitter exchanges between present and former faculty members over alleged violations of academic freedom, "racist" hiring policies, and the like. One member of the embattled history department—not, one supposes, a card-carrying "fascist racist" since he writes for the *Nation*—remarked resignedly: "I recognize the futility of trying to set the record straight in a periodical dedicated to the proposition that nothing is as it appears to be. . . ." (*NYR*, December 4, 1969). A departmental crisis in another university, which is still the subject of controversy and vehement radical manifestoes in two countries, was precipitated by an advertisement placed in the *NYR* seeking applicants for a department with a "radical orientation" (*NYR*, March 15, 1969).

Since the New Left and "the Movement" amount essentially to a mood and a rhetoric embracing a wide variety of causes and often minuscule organizations frequently in conflict with one another, the editors of the *NYR* are able to cater to it without burning their bridges to the larger liberal-left intellectual world from which most of their readers are inevitably drawn. The present situation differs from that of the 30's and 40's when a left-wing journal could scarcely avoid an unambiguous stand in relation to the CP and Stalinist Russia. Thus the main component of the *NYR*'s political line is a pervasive anti-Americanism that draws almost as freely on aristocratic, conservative traditions as on neo-Marxist, anarchist, and populist sources. Culturally, the *NYR* remains pretty much what it has always been. Since to cherish the proper Left sentiments leads to no crucial test in action such as submitting to the discipline of a Communist party and embracing its cultural philistinism, the *NYR* is able in the present climate of opinion to have the best of both worlds. Hence the echoes of the symbiotic relation between latter-day Bloomsbury and fellow-traveling politics in Kingsley Martin's *New Statesman* of the 30's.

ONE EXAMPLE of a quasi-political theme that serves all these diverse purposes is the demonism of technology. If New Left radicals go in for much "shopping around for 'ersatz' proletariats," in Philip Rahv's words, a number of *NYR* writers seek to define the technical and scientific intelligentsia as a stratum of "technocrats" constituting a new bourgeoisie or ruling class. Chomsky's attack on the "new mandarins" is one of the best-known instances of this tendency. But the fullest expression of the attitudes of the school can be found in a *NYR* special supplement by John McDermott entitled "Technology: the Opiate of the Intellectuals" (*NYR*, July 31, 1969). Blaming technology for defacing nature, fostering a new elitism, dehumanizing men, and subordinating social life to the demands of what Karl Mannheim called "functional rationality" is as old as the Industrial Revolution itself. But until fairly recently such evaluations were more commonly found on the Right, among romantic reactionaries, than on the Left.

McDermott never gets around to defining very precisely what he means by technology, though he complains that other people's definitions are too "abstract," but he insists that its demands require not only material inventions but "institutional innovation" as well. It is hard to see why institutional innovation, or the general principle of *laissez innover* which McDermott attributes to enthusiasts for technology, should be regarded as in themselves so sinister. Institutional innovation is surely the objective of the Left—McDermott himself calls for the "radical reconstruction" of American life. Predictably, his major example of technological determinism is the computer selection of bombing targets in Vietnam. "Not one person in a hundred," he complains, "is even aware of, much less understands, the nature of technologically highly advanced systems such as are used in the Vietnam bombing program." Technology, therefore, creates an elite with a special language of its own which the masses cannot understand and this brings about "a decline in one of the essentials of democracy." Would McDermott, then, suppress science, which long ago divided into specialisms that are often as incomprehensible to each other as to the proverbial "man in the street" he invokes? And why stop there? How many of the non-scientific articles and reviews published in the *New York Review* reflect and create a "political and cultural gap between the upper and lower ends of American society"? The Catonist implications of this kind of populism should be obvious.

But McDermott is primarily interested in identifying "technology's leading classes" whose expertise enables them to control the "technological systems" which are also hierarchical social organizations, non-egalitarian meritocracies. Here his concepts become as vague and rubbery as those of most of the writers who have previously tried to cope with this subject. He fails at the outset to distinguish between technology and bureaucracy, apparently not having read Max Weber. He also blurs the distinction between technical and bureaucratic "decision-makers," on the one hand, and political powerholders, on the other. Here again Max Weber would have proved helpful, especially his writings on parliament and bureaucracy in Germany. The technical elite McDermott invokes as an anti-democratic bogey is expanded to include Presidents John-

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son and Nixon and their advisers, "out-of office Kennedyites," the senior (but not the junior) faculty in the universities, and such alleged ideologists of the technological demiurge as Zbigniew Brzezinski, Daniel Bell, and Herman Kahn—in other words, most of the people toward whom the contemporary radical is expected to feel proper indignation.

The various conceptions of an "educational and scientific elite," or a "New Class," put forward by such writers as Galbraith, Bazelon, and Heilbroner are not very satisfactory either; these writers view the new elite benignly and endow it with some of the qualities of *both* the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, seeing it as an outgrowth of the former, ready to assume the historical role of creating a more rational, post-capitalist society which Marx assigned to the latter. McDermott, Chomsky, and the anti-technocrats usually present little more than a negative mirror-image of these formulations in the service of a vague populist egalitarianism. Moreover, many of the strains in today's youth culture which have shaped the ethos of the New Left actually increase the likelihood of a society in which, in the words of Saul Bellow's Mr. Sammler, "an oligarchy of technicians, engineers, the men who ran the grand machines . . . would come to govern vast slums filled with bohemian adolescents, narcotized, beflowered and 'whole.'"

PERHAPS THE TWO writers most representative of the *NYR*'s outlook are Noam Chomsky on specifically political matters and Edgar Z. Friedenberg as a wide-ranging social critic. I have written elsewhere on Chomsky and shall try to avoid repeating myself.* His most marked trait is to appear to deduce an extreme and harsh moral-political judgment of the United States from the premises of an intensive description of a highly particular and local situation which, however selective his documentation, can by no stretch of logic support his conclusion. In *American Power and the New Mandarins* (most of which first appeared in the *NYR*), Chomsky was unable to arrive at a definitive and unequivocal answer as to why the United States became embroiled in the Vietnam war in the first place beyond the longstanding criminality and rapacity he ascribes to American leaders and their intellectual advisers. More recently, he has suddenly discovered that the "controlling assumption" behind U.S. misadventures in Southeast Asia is the desire to maintain Vietnam as a market for Japan (*NYR*, January 1, 1970; *NYR*, June 4, 1970). Chomsky continually makes huge leaps from highly specific contemporary events in Indochina to unqualified accusations of vicious, arrogant, racist treatment of other peoples by the United States, which has allegedly dominated an unchanging American character throughout the nation's history, beginning with the massacres of Indians in colonial Massachusetts for which Cotton Mather provided religious-moral justifications, just as Walt Rostow, Samuel Huntington, and Ithiel de Sola Pool have been ideological apologists for the Vietnam war.

The very title of Chomsky's forthcoming book, *At War with Asia*, is an exaggeration. When Richard Nixon recently commented that those who question the domino theory "haven't talked to the dominoes," his remark was greeted with derision and indignation by the left-liberal press. Though it was specious as a reason for continuing the war, Nixon had a point concerning the maintenance of an American "presence" in Vietnam. Chomsky favors, of course, the total, unilateral withdrawal of American troops, yet in all his voluminous writings on Indochina I cannot recall any mention of the views of the leaders of Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, or Burma, not to speak of India and Japan. (He does mention the governments of Thailand and the Philippines, but only to dismiss them as virtual American puppets.)

For all their display of the apparatus of careful scholarship, it is hard to see how anyone but the already persuaded could take Chomsky's articles seriously any longer, or even bother to read them for that matter. Reality, even the reality of the misbegotten war in Vietnam, just could not be that mechanically consistent. Chomsky is an ideologist, masquerading sometimes as an up-to-the-minute journalist, sometimes as a scholar, sometimes as a plain-talking intellectual who belongs only—in his own words—to "the party that insists that grass is green," and his consistency is the result of the fixed, unvarying premises with which he starts.

Edgar Z. Friedenberg is, like Chomsky, given to such extreme and absolute statements imputing evil designs to large numbers of Americans that one is often inclined to dismiss him as simply overwrought. In a recent letter to the *NYR* (July 23, 1970) he announced, "as Kent State goes, so goes the nation" and described the majority of his fellow-Americans as "honkies." I confess I am still capable of shock at the spectacle of a Jewish intellectual characterizing the bulk of the citizenry by means of a derisive epithet originally applied to Slavic immigrants and then adopted by Negroes to refer to whites. In the early years of the *NYR*, Friedenberg, in a piece on Erik Erikson, derided the very possibility that such public figures as Adlai Stevenson, Nelson Rockefeller, Robert Kennedy, Robert Wagner, and, oddly, Leonard Bernstein might serve youth in this "age of the anti-hero" as models for identity "worthy of fidelity and disciplined devotion" (*NYR*, May 6, 1965). This bothered me a little at the time, not because I was

* "Chomsky: Of Thinking and Moralizing," *Dissent*, January-February 1970.

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an unbounded admirer of any of the men mentioned, but because it reminded me of Saul Bellow's (or Augie March's) wise rejection of "the opinion of students who, at all ages, feel their boyishness when they confront the past" and conclude that "we're at the dwarf end of all times and mere children whose only share in grandeur is like a boy's share in fairy-tale kings, beings of a different kind from times better and stronger than ours." Recently, Friedenberg appears to have discovered contemporaries "of noble intent" possessing a renewed "vision of excellence" in—Abbie Hoffman and David Dellinger (*NYR*, June 4, 1970).

But although he shares the fashionable technophobia and juvenophilia of other *NYR* writers, Friedenberg's outlook has greater unity and coherence. The "public world" and its leading figures are his primary targets and he does not hesitate to voice bluntly and straightforwardly his distaste for the traditional democratic and egalitarian sentiments of the American credo, giving expression to a cultural and spiritual elitism that is usually carefully muted in other *NYR* writers. Speaking more in the accents of the "new conservatism" of the 50's than in those of the New Left (but of course the two tendencies have more in common and are far more compatible than a superficial glance would suggest) he sees democracy and equality, along with technology, as the source of the defects in the American character and American life, in particular of the violence and vindictiveness with which, in his view, blacks, educated youth, and those spiritual aristocrats, adolescents, are treated. Friedenberg is given to citing with approval Tocqueville on the "tyranny of the majority," Weber's most elitist characterizations of democratic government, Henry Adams, and such contemporary religio-conservative writers as Jacques Ellul and George Grant, a Canadian philosopher who is a follower of Leo Strauss.* All this may seem to blend rather strangely with Friedenberg's admiration for the youth culture and his status as a campus hero (he was the choice of radical students for the presidency of City College), but there is certainly nothing inherently objectionable in it—it seems a pity, in fact, that such hard-headed critiques of Enlightenment pieties, which deserve serious consideration, should most recently have been popularized among American intellectuals in connection with polemics against soft-on-Communist liberalism in the 1950's.

BUT FRIEDENBERG's less theoretical diatribes against contemporary America, as in the letter previously cited, and many of his concrete observations, strike a more disturbing note. For example, he recently remarked that American racism and xenophobia are partly reactions against "egalitarian ideology" and that "social stratification" is preferable to "genocide": "In pre-industrial Southern towns and cities there were no black ghettos and no need for them—racial caste provided a more than adequate substitute for racial segregation and the presence of black residents was not perceived by whites as a threat to the neighborhood" (*NYR*, June 4, 1970). One recalls that Friedenberg grew up in Louisiana and is grateful that he stops short of using the same argument to justify slavery, as others have done often enough in the past. Friedenberg also complains of "the unwillingness or inability of high-status adults to protect themselves and especially their children from harassment and constraints by lower-status sentinels hired for the purpose. As the roster of major public officials, general officers and diplomats, whose children are busted for pot or protest grows, no one . . . wonders why a ruling class should shamefacedly define its own children as completely vulnerable to constraint by their putative status inferiors." My first reaction to this surprising statement is to imagine the howl that would be raised not only by those Friedenberg calls "honkies" but by his own black and New Left happy few, if evidence were to come to light that the Cahills, Samuelses, Shrivers, or Kennedys had indeed acted to shield their children in the manner he suggests. Friedenberg is truly the advocate of special privileges for gilded youth, confirming current working-class and lower-middle-class suspicions that campus protesters and suburban hippies are a pampered elite. He simply fails to consider that a principled belief in equality before the law—however questionable the particular law at issue—rather than expediency or spinelessness might influence the conduct of public officials whose children are in trouble with the police.

Friedenberg's views, however curious to find them coming from a writer identified with the Left, are at least expressed vigorously and directly. The elitism and cultural snobbery of other *NYR* writers are usually a matter of tone and passing allusion. When Murray Kempton, for example, refers to "the politics of Northern New Jersey" as "an entertainment of circus animals" and observes that "Mafia transcripts . . . seem to constitute . . . the entire body of work published by residents of Essex County during the past year" (*NYR*, July 2, 1970), he sounds here, as elsewhere, for all the world like that old American Tory, H. L. Mencken—come to think of it, Kempton comes from Baltimore too.

FRIEDENBERG's rejection of American society seems so extreme as to be beyond conceivable political rectification. In this too his outlook re-

* For Friedenberg's views on democracy, I have, in addition to his *NYR* pieces, drawn on two essays published elsewhere: "The Revolt against Democracy," *Change*, May-June 1969; and a review-article in the *American Sociological Review*, December 1968.

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sembles that of Burkean conservatives and the stoical anti-modernism of Leo Strauss's followers. The Berkeley team of John Schaar and Sheldon Wolin present a more political version of the same outlook. Sharing Friedenberg's extravagant admiration for radical youth and his animus against "the technological society," they are fearful that some of the reforms sought by the Left might actually be put into effect by the present administration, thereby undercutting youthful protest (*NYR*, May 7, 1970). In embracing the cause of environmental restoration, Nixon, they argue, "has captured the issue which might allow for peace between the political system and the younger generation" and, regrettably, "in some half-conscious way the younger generation had already begun to grope toward the accommodation which the President later offered."

ONE CAN scarcely blame Schaar and Wolin for failing to foresee the Cambodian invasion, but the political sagacity they attribute to the Nixon administration as well as its freedom and willingness to neutralize protest from the Left are, to put it mildly, excessive. The ecology issue, they declare mournfully, possesses "uniquely ecumenical qualities" in contrast to "past controversies over the war, the draft, and educational reform [that] sharply divided the young from their governors and elders." Moreover, the President will not merely "champion ecology" but also "guaranteed annual income, a more rational welfare system, and peace in Vietnam." Schaar and Wolin almost sound like out-of-office politicians complaining that the opposition has stolen their program. Not like liberal Democrats, however, for in their view only the revolt of the radical young enabled "the Muskies, McGoverns, and Fulbrights to criticize the Vietnam calamity with political safety." But "the system" possesses even greater capacities for taming the young: "The governors of the technological order could combine repressive legal measures with a welfare system which would merely have to extend many elements already present or probable, such as a guaranteed annual income and unemployment compensation. Subsidize the arts so that music would blare throughout the land, and then take the final step of relaxing drug controls. This seems incredible, but no more so than Senator Goldwater urging the relaxation of marijuana laws. *When the incredible becomes credible, then the system will have systematically introduced juvenicide as public policy.*" [my italics—D.W.].

Perhaps I fail to understand this rhetorical flourish with which Schaar and Wolin end their article, but does it not amount to a variant of "the worse it gets, the better it gets"? How dreadful that "the system" might be resourceful or sensible enough to do such things as end the war in Vietnam and legalize marijuana! I must say I find it rather less "credible" than Schaar and Wolin that the Nixon administration might adopt such policies. Yet Schaar and Wolin are not revolutionaries, for they dismiss "vulgar Marxism and Maoism" and "Weatherman adventurism." Perhaps they share Mr. Sammler's dark vision of the future that I quoted above. (Why, incidentally, has the *NYR* failed to review *Mr. Sammler's Planet*?) But in that event, they would surely have to abandon their juvenophilia and adopt a far more critical view of the Movement than they seem willing to entertain.

CRITICS OF THE *NYR*'s New Left sympathies usually attribute them to a compulsive editorial determination to be "with it" that has made the *NYR*, in Tom Wolfe's words, "the chief theoretical organ of Radical Chic." Certainly intellectuals are less resistant to cultural fashions and the glitter of apparent novelty than they like to pretend. Such assertions, however, constitute descriptions rather than explanations of the *NYR*'s political tendency. Even if there is something to the view that modern societies (or all societies?) are subject to the regular alternation of Right and Left periods or phases, the events that precipitate the transition from one to the other and determine the depth and intensity of the prevailing phase cannot be ignored.

The crucial event delegitimating American institutions and values in the 60's was obviously the Vietnam war. The civil-rights movement in the late 50's and the election of Kennedy marked the beginnings of a turn to the Left after the cold-war stasis of the 50's, but it was not until Vietnam that liberalism itself was challenged and a sizable segment of the young and the academic world began to define themselves as radicals, dally with ideas of revolution, and proclaim their total disaffection from American society past and present.

Vietnam has had a delegitimating effect of a special kind for the largely middle-aged intellectuals who contribute to and provide much of the audience for the *NYR*. Not the conventional pieties of American patriotism, but the set of ideological—or anti-ideological—beliefs about democracy, the possibilities and limits of change through political action, and the nature of the cleavages in modern industrial society held by liberal-left intellectuals have been thrown into question. The abandonment of past beliefs precipitated by the Vietnam war has been *remissive* in its psychological impact on many of the *NYR* intellectuals: they have experienced a sense of liberation, of expanding horizons, of the rekindling of long-buried sentiments, of the exultant hanging of question marks on what were thought to be settled and thus boring issues. In the late 50's Daniel Bell rather smugly referred to his generation of intellectuals as a "twice-born" gener-

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ation; if so, then a fair number of them have been born for a third time in the 60's.

The remissive sense of release that the new radicalism has brought to a few has been almost perfectly articulated by Susan Sontag, a one-time *NYR* contributor who, although the youngest and perhaps the last of the old breed of New York intellectual, is still not so young as to have escaped the "twice-born" experience. She tells us in her recent, book *Styles of Radical Will,** that "only within the last two years (and that very much because of the impact of the Vietnam war) have I been able to pronounce the words 'capitalism' and 'imperialism' again." "These recent linguistic decisions," she indicates, had to overcome the persistence of "the old conviction of the inadequacy of that language, to which I was first introduced during my precociously political childhood when I read *PM* and Corliss Lamont and the Webbs on Russia, and later, by the time I was a junior at North Hollywood High School, worked in the Wallace campaign and attended screenings of Eisenstein films at the American-Soviet Friendship Society." Freed at last of the inhibiting effects of her repudiation of this past, she has experienced a glorious deliverance: "That I've begun to use some elements of Marxist or neo-Marxist language again seems almost a miracle, an unexpected remission of historical muteness, a new chance to address problems that I'd renounced ever understanding."

Yet Stalinism was an event that in its day had a very similar delegitimating and remissive effect on radical belief and on the intellectuals who responded to the discovery of its horror by moving in the opposite political direction. To be freed from the clichés of "progressive" thought, from the tyranny of having to adopt the correct, "politicized" attitude toward wide areas of experience, was a highly exhilarating experience at the end of the 40's and in the early 50's. "The American celebration" (a phrase coined derisively by C. Wright Mills) and the "end of ideology" as a new freedom *from* ideology were not merely self-serving sentiments under the cover of which intellectuals joined the "Establishment" and reaped whatever material and status rewards it provided them. Anti-Stalinism became the occasion for exactly the same kind of spiritual and intellectual opening of new vistas that opposition to Vietnam has been for some of the very same people in the 60's. Whatever their differences in scale, Stalinism and the Vietnam war were, to be sure, tragedies and major historical disasters, and the moral response of intellectuals to them was a genuine one. But if it is the glory of intellectuals that they strive to universalize their personal and historical experience, their own biographical trajectories of belief, disillusion, and discovery, it is their weakness that they carry the impulse too far, project their own image too consistently and uncritically onto the recalcitrant materials of the historical process. Thus the excesses of one period, hardened into canonistic formulas and familiar incantations, produce an excessive reaction against them when a new shattering event tilts our perspective and forces us to seek new categories of understanding.

I HAVE the impression that literary intellectuals have been more numerous than historians or social scientists among the thrice-born who have embraced the new radical dispensation. Let me hasten to add that I in no sense mean to imply by this anything so absurd or offensively arrogant as that because historians and social scientists specialize in the study of politics and society they are therefore "experts," safely inoculated against infection from current political fashions. It is simply that professional students of politics tend to develop a vested interest in the assumptions underlying their scholarly work, assumptions shaped by the ideological concerns of a given period but, if the work is any good at all, transcending the particularity of these concerns. Literary intellectuals are not weighted down by this particular kind of ballast —note Miss Sontag's reference to her new radical outlook as the consequence of "linguistic decisions"; it is hard to imagine a political theorist or economist so describing his use of the terms "capitalism" and "imperialism." One recalls also that the *New York Review*, initially and still primarily an organ of literary intellectuals, has been far more resistant to cultural than to political fashions. Commitment to certain artists and works of art, to a literary tradition or a mode of critical discourse, is the literary intellectual's equivalent of the historian's commitment to a given view of American institutions or the sociologist's to a particular theory of contemporary social structure. Philip Rahv, for example, may once again deploy the Marxist terminology of his youth, but he has very little use for the present cultural scene or the "trendy" critics whom he sees as betraying their standards by celebrating it.

YEARS AGO in this journal I criticized David Riesman's advocacy of what he called "countercyclical thinking." In counseling resistance to the dictates of the *Zeitgeist,* Riesman nevertheless seemed to endow it with too much power over our ideas and attitudes, to prescribe a degree of sensitivity to it that might very well be crippling. "If one starts by listening to what everyone else is saying in order to correct or balance their partial visions," I argued, "one risks becoming enmeshed in the very nets of ideas one wishes to escape. There must always be thinkers who can look at the world with a fresh innocence, cats to stare at the faces of kings, and children

* Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 224 pp., $5.95.

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to exclaim at the nakedness of emperors." Fine sentiments, an exalted conception of the intellectual's calling, but having since lived through one more turn of the cycle, I now see more value in Riesman's notion. He was, after all, one of the first intellectuals to understand the pervasive influence of the mass media, especially television which was still new at the time he wrote, some years before McLuhan not only acknowledged but acclaimed the media as the only true legislators of the world. Today we witness the exploitation of the "counter-culture," up to and including its revolutionary manifestoes, by the communications industry. Nor is this confined to the United States: several of the larger commercial publishers in West Germany have recently turned to the highly profitable mass publication of Maoist tracts for the New Left students and their following. The mental *Gleichschaltung* created by a national communications system reaching from elite organs like the *New York Review* to the campus, which has itself certainly become a mass medium, through movies and popular music to TV programs funneled into every household, makes any effort at counter-cyclical thinking resemble that of the Dutch boy with his finger in the dike.

THE 50's now appear to have been an exceptional period in the degree to which radicalism vanished from the American political scene. A great war was followed by the threat of an even more destructive one in which the Left appeared compromised through past association with the prospective enemy. But this seemed to coincide with changes in American capitalism—some of which were in fact if not by inherent necessity consequences of the militarization of the economy—that moderated past divisions in the society and made obsolete old political issues. The expansion of higher education, the publishing industry, and the arts in a time of prosperity made it all the easier for intellectuals to accept their *embourgeoisement* as an inevitable process. At the level of theory, social analysts of the 50's were guilty of eternalizing the present, though it is often overlooked that this was as true of those like Mills and Marcuse who rejected the apparent status quo with despair and anger as it was of those like Bell and Lipset who accepted it in recoil from the Stalinist corruption of the radical impulse, or in a spirit of post-Marxist complacency or resignation as the most and the best we could hope for. It seemed urgently necessary in the 50's to insist that the Promethean aspirations of the Left to reshape society in the image of greater freedom, equality, and self-determination were rooted as deeply in the human condition as the conservative yearning for order, stability, decorum, and institutional piety.

The 50's can now be seen as an aberration in which the temporary obliteration of radicalism insured its crude and forceful reappearance in the 60's when the New Left, like a drowning man who mentally traverses his whole biography in an instant, recapitulated in a few short years the entire century-and-a-half history of radicalism in the modern West to end up in its present neo-Stalinist mood, more self-indulgent than its predecessor but also less politically effective in the absence of the organizational discipline of a Communist party directed by a powerful foreign dictatorship. Radicals do not, by definition, see the existing order as fixed and unchangeable, but they are susceptible to their own distinctive way of eternalizing the present, and there are ample signs today that they have fully succumbed to it. The radical projects present tendencies forward to a desired apocalyptic climax: revolution leading to the emergence of an unspecified "better society," or, in a more openly catastrophist version, the triumph of reaction ("fascism") as a prelude to the successful revolt of vastly expanded numbers of the oppressed and victimized. All political theories contain a self-fulfilling element to the extent that they influence the conduct of those who are persuaded by them, which then becomes a condition to be dealt with by those anxious to falsify the theories. There is also the hidden, often unconscious, will to be proven right, to see history vindicate one's ideology. Thus those who continually forecast repression and violence are often legitimately suspected of seeking repression and violence—the shepherd who cried "wolf" clearly hoped for the pack to descend upon his flocks.

THE *New York Review* is guilty of having fed all these tendencies, sometimes by directly encouraging them, sometimes by accommodating itself to them, in general by providing them with a cloak of intellectual respectability. It has thus contributed to the present prospect of a confrontation on all fronts between the Movement at its arrogant, mindless worst and the demagogic, patrioteering Right, a confrontation that will do little harm to the established intellectuals and tenured academicians who produce the *NYR* but which promises to hurt seriously the very groups whose interest they claim to uphold.

The first victim, however, has been the truth, or that part of the truth which has not found its way into the pages of the *NYR*. Reviewing Steven Kelman's account of student politics at Harvard, *Push Comes to Shove*, Kenneth Keniston concedes the validity of Kelman's charge that the SDS radicals "are undemocratic, manipulative, and self-righteous to the point of snobbery and elitism," but then observes that although "Kelman's angry book is written almost entirely to those on his Left . . . his book will mostly be read by those far to his Right, and it will be used (much against his wishes) to provide further ammunition for the Reagans,

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Mitchells, and Agnews in their politically profitable war against the alienated and radical young" (*NYR*, September 24, 1970). Is this not tantamount to saying that Kelman should not have written—or published—his book just now? One cannot help being reminded of those who thirty years ago argued that to tell the truth about Soviet Russia was "to play into the hands of the Hearst Press," or, a decade later, of Joe McCarthy. The Left thus surrendered this truth to the Right, which promptly exaggerated it and twisted it for its own political ends with results from which we, not to speak of the Vietnamese, are still suffering. Yet after all this, one finds Keniston clucking his tongue over Kelman's "exposé of the dirty linen of cultural revolutionaries and political revolutionaries in Harvard SDS," as if the only important consideration were what the right-wing neighbors will say.

THE DEGENERATION of the New Left into its present irrationality and moral authoritarianism is not unconnected with the at first obsessive and then complacent anti-Communism of the 50's, acquiesced in and even furthered by too many intellectuals, that had the effect of stigmatizing any protest against injustice in America with facile references to the evils of Stalinism or the alleged larger urgencies of the cold war. Yet there is a real chance of avoiding any repetition today of the excesses of the anti-Communist liberals of two decades ago. Intellectuals are not now, as they were then, experiencing the subtle and not-so-subtle intoxications of a vast improvement in their social position and cultural authoritativeness, for that has already been attained. Our commitment to democratic values need not this time lead to an "American celebration" in which successful social mobility disposes us to see those values as fully embodied in our very imperfectly democratic institutions. Nor are we faced with the external threat that Russia seemed to present in the aftermath of a war that had already mobilized mass patriotic emotions in a crusade against a totalitarian enemy. The democratic Left is in a more favorable position to assert once again against usurpers the primacy of freedom and democracy, of a politics of substance rather than of gesture and rhetoric, and the enduring need for civility, tolerance, and intellectual rigor if we are to make any headway in changing American society in the direction of its own professed ideals.

Perhaps I am too optimistic in thinking that the democratic Left can now recapture the political initiative, for what happens within the liberal intellectual world cannot in the end be isolated from larger political events. But present priorities are clear, and we can expect little help, on the basis of past performance, from the *New York Review* in recognizing them. It is not essentially a matter of directing attention to the continuing tyrannies and threats to peace of the Communist powers, of exposing the irrelevance of Third World leaders and movements to the problems of American society, or of defending the university, properly divested of its involvement with the military machine, as a non-political center of learning and creativity, important as these may often be. Today, as more and more American intellectuals are once again coming to see, we need most of all to be reminded of the seductive poisons of unrestrained ideological thinking, of the brutalizing effects of political enchantments that trap men in the simplifying formulas of either-or, *"kto kvo?,"* "he who is not with me is against me," and "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." The real lesson learned by the anti-Stalinist intellectuals of the 40's, whatever corrupt uses some of them may later have made of it, was the menace of the politicized will, feeding on its own self-righteousness, thrusting blindly forward in a frenzied activism until it finds or creates the resistance it seeks, a consummation which, now as then, can have disastrous consequences for all of us.

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Jews in the Mind of France

Renee Winegarten

In France, where nearly all the scenes of the modern Jewish dilemma have been dramatically enacted since the end of the 18th century, the curtain has again risen on a weird performance. The subject of the play, dual loyalty or the Jewish plot, is an old one, and as the actors take up their ritual positions and wield their traditional weapons against mythical targets, the audience can savor the pleasures of recognition, greater by far than those of novelty for the experienced playgoer. For him, indeed, the principal originality lies in the fact that this old ritual drama is being revived at all in the present day. For the first time, perhaps, the performance may appear less pathetic than grotesque, one of those instances where what was once tragedy recurs not quite as farce, but rather as black comedy with its union of the nasty and the bizarre.

When Gilbert Cesbron, the playwright and novelist, cheerfully announced in June 1968, "Napoleon is at last dead, and the longest reign in French history is over," his satisfaction was premature. True, in many fields, time and the reformers have been steadily chipping away at the monument of Napoleonic centralization—or, as some would have it, centralization inherited from the Jacobins as well as the old regime. Where the destiny of French Jews is concerned, however, Napoleon must be held principally responsible, for it was he who contrived to dilute the equality granted them during the Revolution, by fostering various distinctions between them and other Frenchmen. Nowhere, perhaps, is the centralizing spirit and the heritage of Napoleon so evident today as in the impassioned controversy over the conduct of French Jews, their role, their proper duties, that has been raging intermittently in France since the Israeli-Arab War of June 1967. In this controversy, it is often assumed that their reactions and behavior are somehow subtly if not dangerously different from those of their compatriots.

From the Liberation until the Six-Day War, French Jews could bask in the uncommon general air of sweetness, latterly marred by skeptical dissenting voices which indicated that this era was drawing to a close. So long as the governments of France and Israel saw eye to eye in the Middle East, public discretion predominated, and public sympathy appeared widespread. But already with the settlement of the Algerian War, the Franco-Israeli entente seemed in the eyes of some to be progressively less useful to France. The events of June 1967 provided an opportunity for the pursuit of "that enduring element in French policy since Charlemagne . . . the understanding between the eldest daughter of the Church and the Grand Turk," as the late François Mauriac quaintly expressed it.

Today, it is a commonplace for leading French writers and commentators to say that General de Gaulle's lofty rap on the knuckles, delivered at his press conference in November 1967, made social anti-Semitism once again respectable. The regime of President Pompidou, which numerous Frenchmen avid for elevation regard as a new version of the despised bourgeois caution and materialism of the reign of Louis Philippe, may well be less sublime in style than that of his predecessor. All the same, Pompidou once judged de Gaulle's historical assessment of the Middle East situation to be "impeccable," and since he became President he does not appear to have swerved from that view.

Public opinion in France remained divided over the government's Middle-East policy after June 1967, about the embargo on arms to Israel and its extension after the Israeli raid on Beirut airport in December 1968, and about the sale of Mirage jets to Libya after the scandal of the five boats which escaped from Cherbourg in December 1969. Scarcely a crisis in the Middle-East confrontation did not lead to fresh discussion of the embargo and prompt renewed controversy about the Jews. Yet it is not only such exploits as the Beirut raid (Lebanon having traditional ties with France) that reactivated the debate. Every discussion of French policy in the Middle East, such as that stimulated by President Pompidou's stormy visit to the United States between Feburary 24 and March 3, 1970, revives the subject.

In the latter instance, trouble was anticipated

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and fulfilled expectations. To the ill-informed and ill-disposed, it seemed as if Jews on Israel's orders made common cause everywhere. Did Pompidou or did he not call Israel a racial state? A spokesman belatedly denied the incriminating little phrase. Meanwhile, at home, not merely the general charge of dual loyalty but the strong hint of actual disloyalty was being expressed by a former Secretary-General at the Quai d'Orsay (an opponent of the "Suez" adventure), to be countered with outraged dignity by the novelist Romain Gary, who once served under him. It fell to the Foreign Minister, Maurice Schumann, a Jew by origin though not by religion, to declare, in connection with Israel, that it was impossible "to accept that a sector of French opinion should give proof of unconditional allegiance to another nation," a proposition not merely self-evident but uncalled-for in the circumstances. Finally, the world was treated to a rare spectacle as the President of the Republic announced that he was not an anti-Semite, and had his name cleared by Guy de Rothschild, president of the bank of which Pompidou was formerly director.

Nowhere, in short, in the contemporary Western world has open controversy about Jewish loyalty reached such a pitch of acrimony. Yet again, keen eyes perceived the shadow of the Dreyfus affair. Warnings were uttered by prelates and objections voiced by leaders of the Opposition from Jacques Soustelle to Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber. Moreover, each charge against the Jews invariably aroused pained protests from individuals displaying wounds and medals, or from organized opinion. So far, though, apart from the occasional punch-up between pro-Arab and pro-Israel supporters, mostly students, and the occasional racial disturbance in a mixed Jewish-Moslem district like Belleville, only ink has flowed. But the hoary innuendos, the veiled threats, the resurrected fantasies, the hair-raising assumptions proffered by otherwise apparently sensible and gifted people in the respectable press since 1967, prompt one to inquire why the situation in France should have taken such a disquieting turn.

Many observers have expressed the view that some French Jews who should have been aware of national susceptibilities about disunity and of the undercurrents in their still strongly centralized society, behaved incautiously and with singular lack of tact in June 1967. One will probably never hear the last of the proposed Jewish poll-tax for Israel, a fertile source of misunderstanding. The Resistance leader and former Socialist Minister, Daniel Mayer, rashly declared, "I am ashamed of being French . . . ," and it does not much matter now that this phrase was qualified by a subordinate clause. Worse still, those Jews who chanted "Charles Pétain," or otherwise associated the French liberator with the head of the Vichy government—whether in France or Israel—gave deep offense, and not only to Gaullists. Yet even when these oft-remembered instances (to which might be added more recent ones, such as a Jewish editor's suggestion that the traditional prayer for France should be modified) are taken into account, there remains little doubt that they provide an excuse for, rather than a cause of, the constantly renewed polemic about the Jews. This polemic is merely one indication among many of a deep social malaise.

FAR-REACHING CHANGES have affected the French social fabric since 1945. France is still undergoing a belated industrial, technological, and social revolution whose effects are visible to the most casual eye, in the reclamation projects of the Camargue or the powerplants of the Rhone Valley, and in the life style of the new town centers and suburbs. Some three million people have left the land for the cities since the Second World War. Small shopkeepers, crushed by competition from supermarkets, have angrily raised the banner of a new *poujadisme*. Inevitably, similar pockets of resistance to change fight on, while for some individuals change is not fast enough. Such a situation, with its open and disguised conflicts between old and new, with its recurrent scenes of protest and street agitation, is one that customarily leaves the Jews exposed and vulnerable, and the present social upheaval in France is no exception.

Within the wider context of the changes in French society, the nature of the Jewish community has changed too. Where formerly the Napoleonic-sponsored process of assimilation encouraged the growth of nominal if not invisible Jews, later with the arrival of the *chagallistes* (or East European Jews), and more recently with the influx of North African Jews from Egypt after "Suez," from Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria, the Jewish population has risen to be the first in Western Europe. But it seems doubtful whether the presence of these Mediterranean Jews, though in customs and religious observance they may be more visible than the old-established families, has seriously influenced the public controversy, except perhaps indirectly and subconsciously. Few of them have participated in it, in contrast with eminent French-born Jews. Good reason exists for the soul-searching of the latter: for the first time since the war, marginal Jews sensed that they were being subtly threatened in one of their dearest assumptions, namely, that they were fully and unreservedly citizens indistinguishable from other Frenchmen whose position and rights were unquestioned and unquestionable.

Vast changes may have been taking place, but habits of thought are slower to change. The French do not welcome cultural pluralism. Nor do they believe in letting sleeping dogs lie. *Either* one is this, *or* one is that. They consider it es-

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sential to be able to define one's position and one's terms clearly and distinctly, and perhaps this attitude makes it even more difficult for them than for everybody else to grasp the complexities involved in modern Jewish definition.

Nor can the legacy of history be overlooked. Historical precedents have exacerbated French sensibility about dual loyalty, for in the past sects and parties (such as the Huguenots or the Royalists) were rarely reluctant to call upon the aid of foreign friends. The idea that some faction (as in the case of the 19th-century Ultramontanists serving the Papacy, to say nothing of the Communists) might put allegiance to its principles or beliefs above national unity and the national well-being, or that a foreign power might be making use of a sectarian group of French citizens for its own ends and against the interests of the French state, occurs fairly readily to a historically-minded Frenchman. Mere criticism of foreign policy can therefore sometimes arouse accusations of disaffection.

Moreover, in a "monocracy," where the President's authority is supreme in every domain (a view emphasized as much by President Pompidou as by General de Gaulle), to press for changes in policy through the democratic process becomes virtually a form of treason against the Constitution of the Fifth Republic. One Gaullist Deputy went so far as to remind French Jews (with non-Jews who opposed the embargo thrown in for good measure) that they should remain loyal to the country of their birth, and should not seek to drag their compatriots into a crusade that might end in war. What is really at issue, then, is the right to criticize the government or to sympathize with causes abroad without necessarily having one's good faith impugned, a right which is recognized in theory but only too often denied in fact to French Jews and non-Jews whose opinions on the Middle East do not coincide with the policies of the present French government.

THE VERY MANNER in which Jews were emancipated in France revealed a concern about dual loyalty. As long ago as the debate on Jewish emancipation in the Assembly during the Revolution, it was urged that nothing should be given to the Jews as a people, though everything should be granted them as individuals. When Napoleon, disappointed with the progress of assimilation among the Jews, convened the Assembly of Notables in 1806, followed by the ill-named Sanhedrin in 1807, the Jewish representatives solemnly declared that they were bound only by the religious clauses of the law of Moses. By this declaration, remarked an observer of the day, the Jews "ceased to be a people, and became only a religion." In time, for many, no religious or cultural tie remained. Thus, in June 1967, at a moment when some French Jews (perhaps to their own astonishment) were claiming a minimal right to freedom of sympathy, one still much-quoted Communist, a lady of Jewish origin, felt it necessary to insist that she did not belong to the Jewish people but to the French people, whose contribution to the sum of human liberties she proceeded to enumerate. There were others who believed they owed nothing to a Jewish heritage that was not only totally meaningless to them, but which, like her, they totally misconstrued. Indeed, it is the presence of large numbers of French Jews of this opinion and character which makes the accusation of dual loyalty doubly ironic.

Connected with vague but lasting fears about the danger of dual loyalty is another legacy dating from the period of Emancipation and the Napoleonic Sanhedrin, the belief that Jews are somehow associated in what the Socialist Fourier at the time called an "indissoluble, secret league," a mysterious, invisible, nefarious world conspiracy. This belief still survives among some cultivated Frenchmen even today. Every crisis in France, from the so-called "great May" of 1968 to the "small May" of 1970, not excluding the defeat and resignation of General de Gaulle in April 1969, has been attributed to the hidden influence of the Jews, supposedly venting their pique or taking their revenge. These accusations were made not only by extremists of the lunatic fringe, but by responsible ministers and government spokesmen. For example, the rumor that the crisis of May-June 1968 was due to an Israeli-CIA plot was taken up in high circles. Pompidou, then Prime Minister, hinted darkly at a conspiracy. The General Secretary of the Gaullist party spoke more clearly, observing that had France supplied Israel with Mirages there would have been no crisis. Some months later, Philippe de Saint-Robert, an ardent Gaullist polemicist who is also the author of perceptive and high-minded literary criticism, could describe Israel as "the metropolis of an intangible and omnipresent empire."

So today French Jews find themselves in the line of fire from various directions: from devoted Gaullist followers and officials of the government, from adherents of the extreme Right and the extreme Left (both Old and New), from elements hostile to Judaism, particularly among supporters of the anti-Zionist left-wing Catholic *Témoignage chrétien*. The extreme Right talks of the need to defend French sovereignty against the Zionist lobby, and like the extreme Left, sees in what it calls international pan-Zionism the probable cause of another world war (speculation that has a familiar ring). The novelist Jean Cau warned young Jewish supporters of the New Left that their anti-Zionism would not save them from being eventually crushed between the forces of Right and Left.

With the events of May-June 1968 the bogey

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of the alien Jewish troublemaker reappeared. A good many of the students and teachers who participated in the revolt were Jews, or had Jewish names: hence the query as to how many of these new *enragés* were "authentic Frenchmen." The high command included Alain Krivine (a Trotskyist who was afterward to become a candidate for the Presidency), Marc Kravetz, Alain Geismar, and Daniel Cohn-Bendit. Of these, the star and the symbol, the one still remembered for violent rhetoric and impudent clowning, was Cohn-Bendit, born at Montauban of German-Jewish parentage. He had opted for German nationality and was studying in France on a renewable visa. The Communists denounced him as a bogus revolutionary, and he called them "Stalinist vermin." And just as the Gaullists account him responsible for their defeats, so the Communists lay the blame for left-wing defeat in the general election at his door: "It's all Cohn-Bendit's fault," said Georges Marchais, deputy General Secretary of the Communist party. Everyone remembers how right-wing demonstrators who paraded down the Champs-Elysées chanting "Send Cohn-Bendit to Dachau" and "France for the French" were greeted with "We are all German Jews." Today, observers point out the negative interpretation of that once noble-seeming reply, which raises the specter of the feared 19th-century German-Jewish international revolutionary.

THE EVENTS of May-June 1968 frightened a good many Frenchmen out of their wits and encouraged an enduring reaction in favor of repressive measures. On the ground that it does not attempt to overthrow the government, the fascist organization *Ordre nouveau*, replacing the banned movement *Occident*, is permitted to function with the same old faces and the same old views as its predecessor. On the other hand, extreme Left *groupuscules* or parties, such as *La Gauche prolétarienne*, founded by Alain Geismar in 1969, and its newspaper *La Cause du peuple* (in support of which Sartre failed to achieve martyrdom), are suppressed. Its adherents believe themselves to be heroes of the Resistance against existing society conceived as the Nazi Occupying Power. "I shall give my testimony today in the street," threatened Geismar (later taken into custody) at the time of the trial of two of the paper's former editors in May 1970, a declaration held responsible for the ensuing riots in the Latin Quarter. Yet if the fears of some are fixed on the figure of the visible Jew in the shape of the expelled anarchist Dany the Red or the Maoist Geismar, the more obscure fantasies of others are still concerned with Drumont's ubiquitous invisible Jew, belief in whose all-powerful hidden hand can be found in the model of one of the most extraordinary aberrations of recent years: the fantastic Orleans affair.

Orleans, capital of the administrative department of Loiret, and for centuries sacred to the memory of Joan of Arc, is a university and industrial town considered so "average" that it is a popular choice for sociological inquiries. In May 1969, a wild rumor spread by word of mouth through this once rather staid cathedral city, and almost led to riots which were averted only at the last moment. The rumor, which appears to have started among convent schoolgirls, concerned two young women who, while trying on the latest emancipated mini-fashions in a shop owned by a Parisian-born Jew, had supposedly been drugged and conveyed—through the gloomy network of medieval cellars under the city—to Beirut or Buenos Aires.

Before long, the number of shopkeepers allegedly involved in the white-slave traffic had risen to six, and their victims from two to twenty-six and more. At the height of the panic, the villains were known to be getting ready to dispose of the entire female population of Orleans. In one version, a submarine was waiting under the river Loire to embark this sizable human cargo. If nothing had appeared in the press (so the story ran), that was because the press, the police, and the authorities were in the pay of the Jews. The truth of the matter was that nobody at all had vanished. After an ugly period, when Jewish tradespeople were threatened by hostile demonstrators and received telephone requests for so much "fresh flesh" (with its echoes of ritual murder), the calumny was quashed by the authorities. But the feeling that something sinister had happened, that the "mystery" had not really been solved, lingers on.

It was not long before Edgar Morin, a leading sociologist of Marrano descent, arrived with a team of researchers whose findings have been published in book form as *La Rumeur d'Orléans*. For Morin, the affair was "infra-political." The extreme Right, first to be accused of fostering this kind of episode, was not involved. Partly a product of economic jealousy, the affair was primarily an example of collective sexual fantasy inspired by the yellow literature that appeals to the semi-literate.

A case of white-slave trading had occurred in Marseilles in 1958 and was possibly the source of later mythical versions, one of which received semi-documentary treatment as a photoplay in a popular magazine just before the Orleans incident. Apparently, from 1959 onward, similar rumors were current at various times in Paris and eleven widely scattered provincial cities, though little attention was paid to them in the press. Amiens was seized by the same fantasy *after* the exposure of the Orleans affair (and there the protector of the Jews was named as Pompidou himself). A good many of these rumors, though

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not all, concerned Jewish traders: one luckless non-Jewish lady shopkeeper fled from Rouen and opened her business elsewhere; but she continued to be hounded by the calumny, and was finally forced to shut up shop. In France, in Morin's opinion, the white-slave traffic is not normally associated with Jews, but with Corsicans and North Africans. What is associated with Jews, however, as in all forms of racial antagonism, is sexual peril. This note, familiar from Nazi propaganda, was to be found in the myth of the Jewish elders who, it will be remembered, took the trouble to meet by night in a cemetery in order to plot, among other things, the corruption of Christian women.

A curious conjunction between low and high literature exists on this theme. Two years before the Orleans affair, in 1967, a young man of twenty named Patrick Modiano wrote a stylish if overliterary first novel that deliberately aims to set the reader's teeth on edge, and succeeds. The protagonist of *La Place de l'Etoile* (a pun on the Parisian landmark and the yellow star), one Raphael Schlemilovitch, assumes the persona of various distasteful French literary stereotypes of the Jew. One of these, for instance, is the anti-Semitic "good Jew of the Collabo" who finds even Céline "too Jewy." (Modiano's second book, *La Ronde de Nuit*, set in Occupied Paris, concentrates on this aspect, the betrayal fantasies of a Jewish youth.) In another of his fanciful roles, Schlemilovitch encounters a shady aristocrat, by extraordinary coincidence the member of an ancient Jewish family of the Loiret department, a white slaver who invites him to join in this activity.

Schlemilovitch accepts, and goes to Annecy, purporting to be a nobleman: "Thus we were living a novel by Estaunié: this young French aristocrat, enamored of mountaineering, was none other than a Jew dealing in the white-slave trade; this notary's wife, so reserved and provincial, would shortly be found, if I deemed it proper, in a Brazilian brothel." Later, as a Proustian Jewish snob, Schlemilovitch enjoys the idea of vengefully corrupting the feudal aristocracy by going to bed with a compliant Marquise, before she is shipped off to Beirut too. The embittered self-conscious fantasies and grating sophisticated parodies of Modiano were to find an echo in the half-fearful, half-delicious imaginings of the contemporary maids of Orleans.

THE ORLEANS AFFAIR and similar instances of collective folly throughout the country provide yet another reminder (if one were needed) of how thin is the veneer of contemporary civilization. The very pressure of modernization fosters psycho-social ferment, suggests Morin, while the same archaic mythology serves the modern just as well as the old situation. The apparently spontaneous mushrooming of the rumor in different places, carrying with it an unpleasant odor of medieval superstition, would imply that there is a primitive level which cannot be reached and which remains untouched by the vast mass of documentation and analysis in all forms issued since the war. Yet even when examining educated opinion, it is astounding to what degree antiquated fantasies persist, and how far there is a tendency to revert to facile thinking in stereotypes.

Are we witnessing in France the last dying struggles of traditional attitudes, where exhausted ideologies continue to fight the shadows of their old battles? Or are we contemplating the enduring protean energy of ancient forms, the revival of the dormant medieval scourge foretold by Camus at the end of *The Plague*? Will the controversy die down the moment French policy in the Middle East is modified, or the situation there changes? Is the form taken by the controversy peculiar to French conditions and manners of thought, or will it have a wider application? It is easier for the present to ask these questions than to answer them. For the present, too, perhaps Modiano's unpleasant pleasantries strike the right note for dealing with a reality at once sinister and absurd. The sheer grotesqueness of the situation really requires the satirical pen of a Voltaire—preferably, though, on second thoughts, a Voltaire who was not an anti-Semite.

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Nixon, the Senate & the War

N. Gordon Levin, Jr.

In October of 1967, Richard Nixon published an article in *Foreign Affairs* entitled "Asia After Vietnam." Nixon's central conception was that America should remain a power in the Pacific region and should help shape the political future of the Far East. "The United States," wrote Nixon, "is a Pacific power. Europe has been withdrawing the remnants of empire, but the United States, with its coast reaching in an arc from Mexico to the Bering Straits, is one anchor of a vast Pacific community. Both our interests and our ideals propel us westward across the Pacific, not as conquerors but as partners."

Nixon saw a Far Eastern future in which the departure of traditional European imperialism had helped to foster a pragmatic Asian nationalism which would permit a cooperative relationship to develop among both the Oriental and the Occidental nations of non-Communist Asia. Culturally, Nixon argued that "all around the rim of China nations are becoming Western without ceasing to be Asian," and that a desirable non-revolutionary modernization process for such countries would involve a balanced mixture of Asian traditions with Western liberal capitalism. American ideals and interests would naturally move westward into an Asia receptive to capitalism:

> These rapidly advancing countries [i.e., Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, South Korea, Malaysia] vary widely in their social traditions and political systems, but their methods of economic management have certain traits in common: a prime reliance on private enterprise and on the pricing mechanisms of the market as the chief determinant of business decisions; a pacing of monetary expansion to match growth in output; receptivity to private capital investment, both domestic and foreign, including such incentives as tax advantages and quick government clearance of proposed projects; imaginative national programs for dealing with social problems; and, not least, a generally restrained posture in government planning, with the government's role suggestive rather than coercive. These nations have, in short, discovered and applied the lessons of America's own economic success.

Yet economic and cultural ties between America and the new Asia were not enough in Nixon's view. Believing that the crucial problem for the future in the Far East was the containment of China's power, Nixon also advocated political and military agreements to buttress America's ties across the Pacific. The United States was no longer to take the lead, however, in Asian security matters. Instead, Nixon preferred non-Communist Asian nations to be initially responsible for their own individual and collective security against conventional pressures from China or the threat of Chinese-supported wars of national liberation. Anticipating his Guam or Nixon Doctrine, Nixon argued that a successful Asian defense system could constitute a useful buffer separating the United States from possible nuclear confrontations with China in the future.

Thus, shortly before becoming President, Richard Nixon had developed a vision of an extensive role for America in Asia's future. The United States was to help non-Communist Asian states contain China and isolate Russia by providing diplomatic support, foreign aid, a nuclear umbrella, and, if absolutely necessary, direct military support. The article also indicated, however, that Nixon remained convinced of the importance of America's role in Vietnam for the achievement of this Asian future. Insisting that national Communism posed a subtler and perhaps more dangerous threat to Asian nationalism than did the older international Communism, Nixon claimed that the nature of the Vietnam settlement would be decisive for the Far East.

I

Given Richard Nixon's view of the dynamics of world development in relation to Vietnam, perhaps the most difficult problem he has faced as President has been how to reduce America's role in an unpopular war in Indochina without, at the same time, sacrificing America's larger aims in Southeast Asia. Nixon's response to this dilemma has been the program of Vietnamization, a subtle policy well suited to the goal of sustaining a protracted, even if slowly reduced, American war effort. Troop withdrawals are carefully planned for maximum

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political effect in the United States and for minimum harm to the allied military capacity in South Vietnam. Troop cutbacks must be large and rapid enough to appease domestic unrest without being so large and so rapid as to upset the Saigon government. No date can be given for a complete American withdrawal lest the Communists be encouraged to fight on and refuse to negotiate on Washington's terms, but, at the same time, the American public must be brought to believe that the end of the war is close lest internal dissent increase and the Communists be encouraged to fight on and refuse to negotiate on Washington's terms.

The Vietnamization policy was actually first developed in the Johnson administration. In an address to the National Press Club on November 21, 1967, General William Westmoreland sketched out a scenario for victory. His scenario included four stages, the last of which is clearly an early version of Nixon's Vietnamization strategy:

> Now for Phase IV—the final phase. That period will see the conclusion to our plan to weaken the enemy and strengthen our friends until we become progressively superfluous. The object will be to show the world that guerrilla warfare and invasion do not pay as a new means of Communist aggression. I see Phase IV happening as follows: Infiltration will slow. The Communist infrastructure will be cut up and near collapse. The Vietnamese government will prove its stability, and the Vietnamese army will show that it can handle Viet-Cong. . . . U.S. units can begin to phase down as the Vietnamese army is modernized and develops its capacity to the fullest. The military physical assets, bases, and ports, will be progressively turned over to the Vietnamese.

Certainly the present administration's position at the Paris talks has reflected neither a lack of confidence in nor a softening of the Johnson position. Washington remains loyal to the Saigon regime and will promote no political settlement, coalition government or otherwise, which threatens Saigon. Moreover, the last few years have seen improvement not only in the allied military position in South Vietnam but in the political strength of Saigon. Washington is able, therefore, to offer free elections under the existing political framework, as a counter to the Communist proposal for a negotiated coalition, confident that the NLF would remain a minority in an election held with the present political ground rules. At the Paris talks, then, Washington continues to support the Saigon incumbents and to insist on the permanent partition of Vietnam, North and South. In short, the American war aims under Nixon are the same as they were under Johnson, only the methods have changed. As Senator Church has described it:

> We are still trying to maintain an anti-Communist regime, resistant to the North, in the southern half of a divided Vietnam. We are still determined to pursue an objective that makes necessary a permanent American military presence in Indochina.

The Cambodian adventure emerged from this strategy.

According to General Maxwell Taylor, war has three dimensions: time, location, and intensity. Defending the allied move into Cambodia, Taylor argued that "what we see here is a temporary expansion of the geographical dimensions of the war in order to reduce its duration and intensity. The loss of enemy supplies should reduce the duration of the war and give time for the working out of the President's Vietnamization process." In fact, the American military had hoped for an opportunity to attack the Cambodian sanctuaries since General Westmoreland first recommended such an action in 1966. In April 1970, with Sihanouk ousted, and with the threatened Lon Nol regime in Phnom Penh pleading for American aid, the long-standing political obstacle to a Cambodian incursion had been removed. As Secretary of Defense Laird told the House Appropriations Committee on May 4: "This is the first opportunity we have had to go into the sanctuary areas in Cambodia. This is a political matter more than anything else." Moreover, the military situation in late April was promising for an attack on the sanctuaries since an estimated one-third of the forty- to sixty-thousand Communist troops in Cambodia had been moving west away from South Vietnam. In Laird's view, "this presented a situation where an allied move into the sanctuaries at that time would mean less American and South Vietnamese casualties than would otherwise be the case."

Yet opportunity alone might not have been enough to lead Nixon to risk the domestic repercussions of a Cambodian incursion had not the President also felt threatened. The threat arose from the military and political tactics of Communist forces in Cambodia directed against the Lon Nol regime after that new government had attempted to force the Communists to abandon their vital supply route through Sihanoukville. General Earle Wheeler has outlined the situation which so disturbed Washington:

> When it became obvious that the new Cambodian government, which came to power with the ouster of Sihanouk on March 18, intended to close the port of Sihanoukville to the Communist arms traffic, the enemy was faced with a dilemma. He could accept the cancellation of existing trade agreements with Cambodia and adapt his strategies to allow Cambodia its sovereign right of neutrality, or he could expand his aggression. Choosing the latter, enemy forces spread into the countryside and began to seize control of the lines of communication from Phnom Penh. As his campaign developed, his

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purpose became clear. The North Vietnamese now seek to open and establish their own lines of communication throughout Cambodia to North Vietnam and to the sea. If they succeed in their new goal, the free world forces in South Vietnam will be exposed to a new enemy strength with access to unlimited resources flanking South Vietnam to the west.

Communist tactical successes in Cambodia might also have led to the overthrow of Lon Nol's pro-American regime. Such political and military setbacks could only have been disastrous, Washington feared, to the morale and staying power of Saigon.

Apparently between April 21 and April 27 President Nixon decided to seize the opportunity offered by Lon Nol's legitimizing presence in Phnom Penh, and by the movement of some Communist forces westward out of the sanctuaries, to order an allied military strike into Cambodia. The primary purpose of the limited incursion was to disrupt the Communist base and supply systems on the flank of South Vietnam before they became consolidated into a more serious threat to allied forces conducting a protracted war. An important side effect, however, was to buttress Premier Lon Nol whose denial of Sihanoukville to the Communists had represented a major allied gain. In his speech of April 30 announcing the Cambodian decision, Nixon spoke of his concern for the future of seven million Cambodians, and Hedrick Smith has reported that the President hoped that an attack on their rear "would divert and disrupt the enemy forces threatening General Lon Nol and also give the Cambodian Premier a badly needed political lift." Essentially, then, the Cambodian incursion resulted when a military and political situation in Cambodia, which Washington had tolerated grudgingly hitherto out of necessity, temporarily improved and then seriously worsened at a time when Nixon had the opportunity and the incentive to make a military response.

Above all, the administration was concerned that the Communists recognize Washington's commitment to the success of Vietnamization and to the maintenance of the Saigon regime. General Wheeler, after describing the tactical purposes of the Cambodian operation, indicated a broader political motive when he told House Appropriations Committee members: "We also hope that, as a result of this operation, the enemy will recognize that we intend to protect the Vietnamization program and that there is no way around serious negotiations." In a related but extended fashion, the President spoke on April 30 of the danger that America's will would come into question around the world if the United States should fail to respond militarily against an enemy whose intransigence threatened new dangers to American lives and objectives in Indochina. "This attitude has become intolerable," charged Nixon. "We will not react to this threat to American lives merely by plaintive diplomatic protests. If we did, the credibility of the United States would be destroyed in every area of the world where only the power of the United States deters aggression."

In the Senate, the liberal response to the Cambodian incursion took the form of legislative efforts to limit the war's geographic scope and to set the date for its conclusion. The Cooper-Church amendment to the Foreign Military Sales Act sought to assure that after July 1, 1970 the administration would need Congressional approval to retain American combat forces in Cambodia, to support third-country forces in Cambodia, and to give direct air support to Lon Nol's troops. In other words, Senate liberals sought to write into law President Nixon's own promises that the Cambodian incursion would be limited and would not lead to a new American commitment. As the debate developed, no voices were raised among Nixon supporters in favor of using American ground troops in direct support of Lon Nol, but pro-administration Senators did object to the clause in Cooper-Church forbidding any "retention" of United States forces in Cambodia after July 1, 1970. How can this apparent inconsistency be understood?

Basically, beyond an overriding desire to protect President Nixon's prestige and credibility at home and abroad, Senate hawks wanted to leave the door open for the President to opt again for a limited strike into the sanctuaries. In other words, his Senate supporters argued that Nixon as Commander in Chief had the authority to make the tactical decision to move into the Communist bases in Cambodia again if they become once more a threat to American troops and the Vietnamization program. Thus Nixon's backers in the Senate were willing to trust the President not to commit American troops to an extended war in Cambodia in support of Lon Nol, but they did not wish legally to forbid "retention" of United States forces in Cambodia after July 1 lest such a legal ban inhibit a future limited strike at the sanctuaries. Furthermore, they argued that Cooper-Church as written would undercut the President's credibility with the Communists and encourage them to believe they could rebuild their bases with impunity. Senate hawks sought, therefore, to add an amendment to Cooper-Church, sponsored by Senator Robert Byrd of West Virginia, to the effect that nothing in the phrase forbidding the retention of United States forces in Cambodia after July 1 should preclude the President "from taking such action as may be necessary to protect the lives of United States forces in South Vietnam or to facilitate the withdrawal of United States forces from South Vietnam."

Senate liberals were successful in defeating the Byrd amendment which they correctly saw as a

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potentially dangerous blank check to give to a President who might be moved by new circumstances or militant advice to send American troops back to Cambodia on a more extensive and permanent basis:

> [Senator Cooper argued that if] President Nixon were to change his policy, he could refer to the Byrd language in much the same manner as President Johnson came to refer to the Gulf of Tonkin language, thus justifying any military activity in Cambodia, no matter how far it extends or how permanent it becomes, as long as he undertakes it in the name of protecting American forces in South Vietnam.

Moreover, anti-war Senators were convinced that the administration's rationale of "protecting American forces in South Vietnam" was an inherently misleading one since it obfuscated the broader reality that the troops were in danger in South Vietnam only because the President chose to keep them there in combat on behalf of political and strategic ends. Senator Fulbright developed this point by way of a suggestive analogy to the earlier French situation in Indochina:

> No one is suggesting that our troops leave instantaneously. But on the other hand there is no great mystery about how to end the war. The French ended a similar war in 1954. In the course of approximately two months after they had made up their minds that it was not in the interest of France to continue with that war, they liquidated the war and got a cease-fire and all of the killing of their soldiers stopped. The withdrawal took some time. But there was no further killing of their soldiers. It went off in a most orderly way. This is the alternative I was suggesting if the President is interested in protecting the lives of his soldiers, rather than in procuring a military victory. What bothers me is what the President actually does, as opposed to what he says. His actions are designed to achieve a military victory.

Liberals refused to permit basically political questions to be subsumed under military tactics. In this same context, while liberal Senators were most concerned with preventing an American combat involvement inside Cambodia on behalf of Lon Nol, the liberals, unlike Nixon's Senate supporters, also sought to foreclose or drastically to circumscribe any repetition of the Cambodian incursion, limited in scope and duration as such a new incursion might be, lest another intervention prove a step toward a more extensive involvement in Cambodia.

Pro-administration Senators charged, however, that the ban on retention of American forces in Cambodia after July 1, unless Congress should so authorize, was an unconstitutional infringement on the right of the Commander in Chief to protect American forces and conduct tactical operations in combat. If Nixon's original strike into the sanctuaries had been a constitutional exercise of Presidential power to control military tactics, then how could Congress legitimately prevent him from repeating the action in the future? Senate hawks also insisted that the neutrality of the Cambodian border areas had long been violated by the Communists and that the sanctuaries were simply an extension of the South Vietnamese battlefield.

Senate liberals responded that they were not seeking to prevent the President from exercising his *proper* power as Commander in Chief to defend American forces in the vicinity of the Cambodian border. The ban on retention of American troops in Cambodia after July 1 did not prohibit either air strikes or small ground raids across the Cambodian frontier in self-defense to break up impending Communist attacks. Cooper and Church did insist, however, that any larger American actions in Cambodia could not be justified simply as "protecting American troops" and would risk involving the United States in a protracted war inside Cambodia.

EARLIER in the year the Congress had already begun to try to establish the outer limits of American military involvement in Southeast Asia when, in section 643 of the Department of Defense Appropriation Act of 1970, it prohibited the use of funds appropriated in that Act to finance the introduction of American ground combat troops into Laos or Thailand. Building on that precedent, Cooper and Church argued that the Senate could make a distinction between purely tactical decisions, to be left to the President as Commander in Chief, and military actions with a broader political significance at home and abroad. Such actions would clearly encompass the widest questions of public policy and legitimately involve the Congress as a co-equal branch of the government. Senator Mansfield defined this fundamental distinction:

> I have questioned policies which have placed American forces in such an exposed position in Vietnam as to necessitate U.S. bombing or hot pursuit across an international border in order to try to protect them. However, I have not nor has the Senate questioned the President's constitutional authority, as Commander in Chief, to give those orders. By contrast, there are grave doubts as to the constitutional authority of the executive branch, unilaterally, to establish a course of action which produces a prolonged, vague, and indefinite military commitment—direct or indirect—in any other country without the concurrence of Congress. That is what the Senate, in effect, has already declared by overwhelming vote in the national commitments resolution. That is what Cooper-Church makes clear with regard to Cambodia.

Senator Church explained on several occasions that Congress could follow its Laos and Thailand precedents with regard to Cambodia and "estab-

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lish limitations which the President will respect." Constitutional lawyer Alexander Bickel, however, remained less sanguine as to the possibility of completely controlling Presidential action on the Cambodian border under Cooper-Church. Asked by Senator Kennedy if Cooper-Church could prevent the President from going back to Cambodia later in strength on the grounds of protecting American forces, Bickel was skeptical:

> I don't think that it deprives the President of the power in an emergency situation where he has to react to attack, to go into Cambodia and protect in combat, as he sees it, American troops. All it prevents him from doing is going into Cambodia and engaging in combat activity in support of Cambodian troops. It does not prevent a reactive decision on his part to defend the threat of attack on American forces in Vietnam, and that is one reason I do not think this job is complete until you get to the McGovern Resolution.

In short, the attempt to legislate military tactics, while perhaps necessary, was ultimately a shaky strategy for Senate liberals since in this area the President's constitutional authority was the greatest and ambiguities were certain to remain. Instead, liberals had to go to the roots and challenge the entire Nixon policy of protracted war in Indochina head on, through the McGovern-Hatfield amendment to end the war.

II

Cooper-Church was, of course, not simply a response to events in Southeast Asia and to the fears of many liberal Senators that America was being drawn deeper into a widening Indochina war. In the aftermath of the Cambodian intervention, and the killings at Kent State and Jackson State, a wave of anti-war activism spread outward from many campuses to be met by a backlash of conservative patriotism from construction workers and other "middle America" supporters of the President. Secretary of State Rogers had warned the President of the likely domestic repercussions of a Cambodian action which would appear to many to have reversed or threatened the policy of withdrawal from Vietnam. No doubt even Rogers was taken aback, however, by the intensity of the reaction. Momentarily the Nixon administration, and the Congress as well, were shaken by the sudden polarization and politicization in the nation, which, if unchecked, might threaten not only the war in Vietnam but the very stability of the American political system itself. In this divisive and threatening context, then, the Senate debates on the Cooper-Church and McGovern-Hatfield amendments saw efforts by both liberals and conservatives in part to relate their positions on the Indochina war to the domestic crisis brought on by Cambodia.

Liberal Senators were quick, especially during the chaotic days of May, to emphasize the extent of the social and political crisis in the country. Senator Fulbright pointed to the manner in which the business community was joining students in their alienation from administration policies and insisted that "morally and socially we are in a condition beyond mere division among ourselves. We are in a condition indicative of social disintegration." Senator Church speculated on the corrosive effect of the alienation of the young on the entire social fabric and on the dangerous way that forcing many young people to fight in a war they believed to be wrong was "sowing the seeds of sedition" in America.

Yet Senate liberals tended to stress social chaos only in the process of advancing their own solutions for the war and national disorder. In other words, the liberal message was one of liberalism *and* order so that one could follow liberal leadership in opposition to President Nixon as a means of resolving, not of exacerbating, the national crisis. In this manner, too, conservative charges that liberals fostered the very domestic upheaval they pretended to decry, could be headed off. Senator McGovern insisted on the liberal responsibility to provide "a constructive alternative to citizen powerlessness and despair and violence," and at greater length he argued that one of the most important functions of his amendment to end the war would be to channel growing unrest productively:

> The central issue now for this Congress and for the people of the United States is whether our own society can, in fact, endure if this war continues. We all have in our minds this afternoon the sad and tragic events on the campus of Kent State University yesterday, a tragedy that the Vice President has described as inevitable. He blames it on the violence of the participants in that effort. It is quite clear, however, that it is an outgrowth of the larger violence in Southeast Asia against which these young people were attempting to raise their voices. . . . It is obvious that this unrest and outcry and protest will not only continue but will also gather force unless some constructive and effective method can be arrived at to funnel the unease and the anguish of the citizens of the country behind an effort to bring this war to a close. . . . I have appealed, and I know that other Senators are appealing, to the students and to America as a whole to channel the efforts in a constructive way behind the amendment.

Thus, in the honorable tradition of reform-liberalism, anti-war Senators acted to respond positively to popular grievances, primarily, of course, with efforts to end the war, the root cause of discontent, but also with efforts to coopt and to moderate the forces of protest lest either they, or the conservative response they might arouse, threaten the ability of liberals to govern and even

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the very fabric of the polity itself. Given his desire for both reform and stability, then, the liberal naturally responded ambivalently to strong dissent from the Left. On the one hand, such dissent was necessary to dramatize issues, to convey a sense of public discontent, and to create a feeling of urgency among legislators. On the other hand, dissent must not become violent and unmanageable, creating a threat to liberalism from the Right. Significantly, after arguing that positive Congressional action was needed to take the war protest off the streets, Senator Church moved quickly to agree with Byrd of West Virginia who insisted that the Senate should take no action simply to appease mob violence. Senator McGovern responded angrily to the bombing at the University of Wisconsin in August and denounced the irresponsible militancy of undisciplined radicals for "undermining those dedicated to the long, hard effort to influence public opinion toward peace and justice." And Senator Fulbright warned radical students of the danger that they might "bring down on themselves a counter-revolution from the Right which would surely destroy their movements and possibly destroy democracy as well."

THE UNDERLYING fear among Senate liberals of the potential force of a conservative backlash was revealed in the ambivalent manner in which they dealt with President Nixon. Time and again liberals spoke of their wish to share with the President the responsibility for ending the war in the face of potential recriminations from the Right. Senator Church admitted that there could not be a pleasant or popular ending to the war and, unless Congress and the President shared the responsibility for extricating the United States from Vietnam, there was a danger that "serious political recriminations could devastate and divide our own country." Similarly, Senator Javits sought to join *with* Nixon to end the war:

> I would like to advance the view that, to me, one of the most desirable things that could result from our debates on the Vietnam war is a joint sharing by the Congress and the President of the responsibility for its termination. Once we get out of Vietnam, events there may be of a character as to make us want to have a shared responsibility, rather than the President or we alone—although we hope and pray that will not happen—in terms of the national feeling of the people of the United States.

War critics also spoke of their desire to support the President in his alleged intention to withdraw and to back Nixon up, as it were, against elements in and out of the Pentagon who urged a continued and even expanded American entanglement in Indochina. "I think," said Church, "it has become important for Congress to strengthen the President's position against all the forces which are pressuring him toward ever deeper involvement in Southeast Asia, by giving legislative definition to the outer limits of our Cambodian incursion."

Tactically, what was involved here was not so much an effort to protect the President from more hawkish advisers as it was an attempt by liberals to find shelter behind the President against a possible conservative backlash or "stab-in-the-back" legend growing up around a Vietnam withdrawal. In other words, liberal Senators directly opposed the President only part of the time and tried occasionally to emphasize instead Nixon's most dovish statements about withdrawal and eschewal of a military solution. This wishful practice revealed that the liberals were torn to some extent between a confrontation with Nixon over Vietnam, risking the possibility that the President might be able to defeat liberalism in a contest for Middle America's allegiance, and an effort to cajole Nixon into repeating the role of de Gaulle, the conservative who ended a bitter war in Algeria and was able to control the French Right while so doing. Thus, even in the midst of their assertion of Congressional authority against President Nixon's war policy, Senate liberals feared confrontation and yearned for an unattainable unity with the President to end the war:

> [This country, argued Mansfield] has to come together some way. There is too much division. There is too much polarization. There is too much emotion. There is too much fanaticism. If this country is to be brought together, the President can play and must play a very important part—the President, I repeat. Why would not a good place to start be with good will toward one another, acting on a common desire to get out of Southeast Asia? Not precipitately—it is an impossibility; but as soon as possible and as quickly as possible.

Liberal hopes and fears notwithstanding, neither the President nor his Senate supporters were anxious to have Nixon play a role in Vietnam analogous to de Gaulle in Algeria. Nixon administration spokesmen have insisted instead that the real internal danger in the United States "will arise not from the students of the Left who wish to abandon the war at any cost but from the people of the Right and even the Center who will be humiliated and angry if he [Nixon] does what the students want him to do." While these fears were partly analogous to the apprehensions of Senate liberals concerning the Right, there remained a crucial difference. The liberals were asking Nixon to help them outflank the Right and create a popular consensus in America for rapid withdrawal from Vietnam. The administration's spokesmen argued, however, that the depth of nationalistic sentiment on the Center and Right made it impossible for Nixon to withdraw too precipitously and risk a defeat in Indochina. In effect, the administration was saying to the liberals, if you want the President to protect you

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against a potentially rightist public opinion, then stop advocating withdrawal and support the President's moderate Vietnamization compromise. Yet it has largely been Nixon and Agnew themselves who have created most of the public support which continues to exist for the policy of protracted war. In fact, Nixon does not so much face a large electorate on the Right, committed to the Vietnam war in positive terms, as he faces an electorate significant segments of which are open to appeals based on authority, patriotism, and anti-radicalism. The administration has chosen to permit Vice President Agnew to mobilize these strata, strata which are spontaneously anti-radical but not spontaneously pro-war, on behalf of a continuing military presence in Indochina.

Thus, even if one grants some sincerity to the administration's insistence that it now fears the very conservative reaction it has done so much to arouse, there also remains a definite element of threat to liberals implicit in the remarks of the President's spokesmen. The inner message is that if pressed by anti-war elements the administration would not hesitate to politicize Middle America to defend Nixon's foreign policy. But it is also true that, as committed as President Nixon is to remaining in control of war policy and to ignoring or combating Senate liberals, he would most prefer a more depoliticized atmosphere of calm and universally restored authority in which the subtle and ambiguous goals of his Vietnamization policy could best be achieved. In press briefings administration spokesmen argued that:

> What we have to attempt to do, really, all of us, is to preserve some vestige of authority in this country, if we are ever going to move with confidence and competence toward a better future. What we have to do in Vietnam inevitably has some elements of ambiguity. We have to convince the American people that we will pull out our troops, but we have to convince Hanoi that the withdrawal is not independent of their actions, so that they have an incentive to negotiate. We have to do many things which cannot be done unless the intermediary leadership in this country will at least support the proposition that there is only one man who can bring peace in Vietnam.

In essence the administration offered a political truce on the war to the Senate liberals, but on Nixon's terms. In return for order, the liberals would have to accept the fact that the ambiguous policy of Vietnamization was the most improvement they could achieve over President Johnson's approach to the war.

PRESIDENT NIXON'S Senate supporters refused to legitimate the Cambodian protest at all and insisted that only firm support for the President could end the war with honor. Senator Curtis of Nebraska denied that campus violence was caused by Cambodia and blamed instead the idea that had developed over the past ten to fifteen years "that the way to determine an issue is to get manpower out into the street and to interfere with what is going on." Senator Murphy recalled the Amerasia case and denounced those on the Left seeking to discredit Saigon, undermine authority at home, and divide the nation along racial and class lines. Senators Bellmon and Fannin charged that Cooper-Church would undermine President Nixon's authority, reveal divisiveness at home, and encourage Hanoi to fight on. Senator Byrd of West Virginia urged internal unity and support for Nixon lest the United States suffer the fate of the French in Indochina. But perhaps Senator Griffin best captured the essential Nixon Republican position, with its ambiguous double emphasis on Nixon as the peacemaker and the victor in Vietnam:

> President Nixon did not initiate this war; it was a fact of life when he took office. He is in the process of bringing our participation in that war to an end on an orderly basis. Up to now we have not been losing the war in Southeast Asia. But unfortunately, and to the delight of the enemy, there is some danger that we could lose in the United States, a war that the enemy has been unable to win on the battlefield in Southeast Asia.

In effect, administration backers in the Senate were accusing liberal Senators, that is those Senate liberals who claimed that domestic unrest made it impossible for the United States to stay the course in Indochina, of furthering that dissent and constructing a self-fulfilling prophecy of defeat.

Conservative Senators also defended the power of the office of the Presidency against liberal assertions of Congressional power. Substantive and procedural concerns tended to merge as administration supporters argued that the institution of the Presidency in general, and Richard Nixon's Presidency in particular, should be supported as the irreplaceable single source of leadership available to the nation and to the non-Communist world. Attacks on the Presidency, conservatives feared, would weaken America's world-power position and undermine further an already dangerously eroded sense of national unity and commitment on behalf of cold-war goals. Politics had to stop at the water's edge, and Congressional interference with Presidential direction of America's foreign and military policies had to be lessened if America's position of global leadership were to be retained. In Senator Dole's view:

> If it were believed—falsely or not—that the President, in the conduct of this nation's foreign policy and in the command of our troops throughout the world, was operating under legislatively directed limitations on his exclusive

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powers, the ramifications would be profound. Our capacity and dedication to meeting our treaty and mutual security obligations would be subjected to considerable question. If the Congress were believed to have restricted the President in Cambodia, what would allay suspicions that limits might not be imposed in situations which might arise in Korea, in Europe, or in Israel? Our treaty partners throughout the world would be forced to reevaluate their positions within our alliances.

In the same connection, Senators Tower and Dominick emphasized that the growth of American power in the modern world had been inextricably related to the role of strong Presidents who were often prepared to use the armed forces without prior Congressional authorization. Finally, an even more sophisticated conservative defense of Presidential power in national security affairs was made by international-relations expert Morton Kaplan in a letter read approvingly into the *Congressional Record* by Senator Allott. Kaplan advocated a depoliticization of American foreign relations, and the maintenance of a steady posture of cold-war commitment which would avoid violent swings toward either isolationism or overreaction. Fulbright and other Senate liberals should cease Congressional tampering with the powers of the Executive branch in foreign policy lest rigidities be produced in American diplomacy preventing the sort of flexibility needed during various crises:

> Numerous polls have demonstrated that the American public soon wearies of limited wars that are fought for limited objectives. On those occasions on which we did intervene, the senator's proposals would reinforce the public impulse for military escalation and total victory. They would sharpen rather than mute alternatives. They would lead to American retreats and then to overreactions. They would minimize the prospects for creative statesmanship and cater to the most simplistic of minds. In that advice lies the prospect of catastrophe in a nuclear age.

The "simplistic" public, whether of the Left or of the Right, disturbs liberals and conservatives at the center of the polity. Yet the liberal and the conservative, each for his own purposes, and albeit ambivalently, is prepared to activate public elements closest to his position on foreign-policy issues. At the same time, both the liberal and the conservative partly yearn for the more stable pre-Vietnam era of cold-war diplomacy when bipartisan elites largely made foreign policy in a context of consensus at the top. During those years "the most simplistic of minds" could be kept at bay because there was general agreement within the foreign-policy establishment. Since the escalation in Vietnam, however, elitist consensus has disintegrated and the perils of politicization threaten the liberal and the conservative alike as they maneuver for public support amid the Executive-Congressional conflicts the American polity normally reserves for domestic issues. Procedural and substantive issues have become intertwined in the foreign-policy debate. Today's liberal, out of power at the White House since President Johnson escalated the war in Vietnam, and out of sympathy with the main direction of America's national priorities toward war and order, advocates greater Congressional control over Presidential powers in foreign affairs. The liberal today argues against potential Executive hegemony in a way reminiscent of positions previously taken by Congressional conservatives against Roosevelt's and Truman's policies at home and abroad.

THE DESIRE of most liberal Senators to reestablish what they believe to be a constitutional balance between Congress and the President in national-security affairs has led to a resurgence of legal and academic interest in the question of Congressional powers in this area. As we have already seen in regard to Cooper-Church, the main effort by Senate liberals has been in the direction of reconciling the President's powers as Commander in Chief and as the Chief Executive with the powers of Congress to declare war, to appropriate funds for the military budget, and to make rules for the government and regulation of the armed forces of the United States. This is a difficult reconciliation to achieve since the last thirty years has seen the United States respond to a variety of perceived global threats and opportunities by permitting initiative in the foreign and military policy areas to be concentrated in the national security divisions of the Executive branch. In other words, the domestic institutional correlative of America's rise to international preeminence and to the leadership of a global alliance system in the nuclear age, has been the concentration and combination of military and diplomatic decision-making in the hands of an Executive branch capable of providing some degree of continuity, secrecy, speed, and decisiveness in policy formation. In the cases of Korea, Vietnam, Lebanon, and the Dominican Republic, the Congress has acted largely after the fact to legitimize military *faits accomplis* by the Executive. It is in this context that liberal critics of the Vietnam war in particular and of American cold-war globalism in general are correct to see that substantive criticism of the direction of American foreign policy must of necessity also involve a procedural and institutional criticism of the growth of Executive power in the United States over the last generation. In short, liberal criticism must involve some effort to separate the use of armed force from diplomacy to the extent that any President is brought to recognize that while he may—in the words of a Yale Law School memorandum—"have primary responsibility in the modern world for the handling of foreign

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policy, he should not have the discretion to initiate war as an instrument of foreign policy."

Yet liberal critics must also recognize that Executive power has not been imposed on the United States but has grown during a period of extraordinary national unity and bipartisan consensus on foreign-policy goals. Such unanimity, only recently broken over Vietnam, may return again; the recognition of long dormant Congressional powers in national-security affairs does not guarantee the existence of the political will in Congress to confront the Executive directly. It took the uniquely intense politicization which followed upon the Cambodian invasion and the Kent State tragedy to produce a majority in the Senate for the Cooper-Church amendment, before its defeat in the House. Such occasions are rare; moreover, they are potentially dangerous because the Right as well as the Left can take to the streets in a crisis and influence policy. Thus, as rational and justifiable as the recent liberal assault on the growth of Executive power in national security affairs may be, the assault might well be tempered with an awareness that there may come a time when the relative independence and remoteness of the Presidency will be a welcome shelter for liberalism against an insurgent popular conservatism reflected in the Congress. Furthermore, this last consideration is related to a larger point which the political theorist George Kateb has often made: political men ought to avoid the irresponsible expansion of particular political conflicts into universalistic struggles over the very institutional and constitutional basis of the polity itself. In the last analysis, of course, the real problem has been the short-sightedness and the cruelty of American policies in Vietnam, policies generally supported until recently by Presidents and Congressmen of both parties. That has been the key, not the American Presidency.

III

THE CLIMAX of a long summer of debate on Indochina policy came in late August when the Senate considered and rejected the McGovern-Hatfield amendment by a vote of 55 to 39. McGovern-Hatfield would have ruled that after April 30, 1971 funds appropriated under the Military Authorization Act could be spent only to secure the safe and systematic withdrawal of the remaining American armed forces from Vietnam by December 31, 1971. In the event of a clear and present danger to American forces, the deadline could be extended sixty days into 1972 at the President's discretion so long as within ten days he submitted a new date for total withdrawal to Congress for its approval. Thus, while Cooper-Church had sought to limit the geographic scope of the war, McGovern-Hatfield went far more radically to the root question of limiting the temporal duration of the war.

Despite its more radical nature, McGovern-Hatfield inspired far less purely constitutional debate than had Cooper-Church. Whatever their profound disagreements as to the wisdom of the amendment, almost all Senators agreed that McGovern-Hatfield was a legitimate exercise of the Congressional power of appropriation under the Constitution. Senator Stennis, a strong opponent of the amendment, was definite on this point:

> I would observe, Mr. President, that the pending amendment is completely constitutional. There is not the slightest doubt that Congress has complete authority to limit the use of funds for this or any other war, or for that matter, on any other activity regardless of whether it is related to the Department of Defense. . . . The clear and unequivocal constitutional authority of the Congress over the "power of the purse" removes any doubt as to the legality of this amendment. The only issue concerns its wisdom.

Stennis and McGovern could agree procedurally, then, that the President could not use his powers as Commander in Chief unilaterally to conduct a protracted war in Indochina or elsewhere if the Congress, after a full evaluation of the issues at stake, should refuse further funding for the war beyond a point in time. Yet on the substantive matter agreement ended, and Stennis, along with other pro-administration Senators, *chose* to appropriate funds for a protracted Indochina war to be conducted at President Nixon's discretion.

All liberal arguments for McGovern-Hatfield started from the assumption that victory in Vietnam was unattainable. With a military or political victory out of the question, it followed that the Nixon administration's dilatory withdrawal program threatened to keep residual American forces fighting an endless war of attrition in Indochina. Not only was Vietnamization seen correctly as a policy of protracted war but it was also portrayed by liberals as the most dangerous of all policies for American troops since it tended to weaken the American military position steadily while not reducing America's war aims in proportion to America's reduced capacity to enforce them. As Senator McGovern put it: "On the one hand we are reducing the number of American forces but we are maintaining the same unacceptable political objective as far as the other side is concerned." As American troop strength declined, but without an American commitment to withdraw completely by a specified date, the incentive for the Communists to attack the remaining United States forces, by then largely dependent on the ARVN for support, would rise sharply. Similarly, the Communists might also be encouraged to expand their already successful military and political operations in Laos and Cambodia as a means of outflanking and pressuring a residual American force in South Vietnam.

On the political and diplomatic side, anti-war

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Senators endorsed McGovern-Hatfield as a way to break vetos by Hanoi and Saigon over American withdrawal. Hanoi could no longer veto our withdrawal because we would cease to demand a reciprocal withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces from South Vietnam. Saigon could not stop the withdrawal process because America would be prepared to leave the South Vietnamese to fight or negotiate on their own. Liberals also suggested that such pressure on Saigon might finally activate the stalled Paris talks, and not end them as Nixon supporters charged.

For their part, administration supporters in the Senate were not interested in making progress at Paris at Saigon's expense, and, since pro-Nixon Senators defined progress in Paris as concessions by Hanoi and the NLF, the President's backers naturally argued that McGovern-Hatfield would destroy the Paris talks by removing Hanoi's incentive to bargain. "As our withdrawal proceeds," said Senator Jackson, "the only leverage we have with which to promote the chance of a negotiated settlement lies in the uncertainty that surrounds the President's timetable." This negotiation argument was apparently decisive for some Senators, like Cooper, Gore, and Percy, who finally made the decision to vote against McGovern-Hatfield. Moreover, the really committed Nixon supporters were goaded by McGovern-Hatfield into revealing the extent to which they perceived Vietnamization essentially as a strategy for victory in Vietnam. On CBS Senator Tower said that America's goal was victory, which he defined as securing the political and military viability of an independent and non-Communist South Vietnam. Senator Byrd of West Virginia criticized the amendment and praised Nixon's efforts "to bring about an orderly and gradual withdrawal without rewarding Communist aggression."

His supporters represented President Nixon, then, as the man who would both end and win the war if Congress did not take away his flexibility in diplomacy and military policy. McGovern-Hatfield opponents also described the military situation in South Vietnam as steadily improving, especially after the Cambodian intervention had relieved Communist pressure on southern South Vietnam. Saigon, it was claimed, needed only a few more years to complete pacification and to allow the ARVN time enough to be trained in the use of sophisticated weaponry. Somewhat inconsistently, however, Senate hawks also raised the specter of a Communist bloodbath in South Vietnam after the sixteen-month withdrawal authorized in McGovern-Hatfield. Liberals were quick to point out that such a fear contradicted the confidence that the President's supporters expressed in the fighting capacity of the ARVN. Senate liberals, while prepared to offer asylum to South Vietnamese leaders, also claimed that the bloodbath theory underestimated the possibility of political compromise in Vietnam after American withdrawal, or even before withdrawal, once a firm date were announced. Moreover, liberals pointed out that those who were most concerned about a future bloodbath were morally oblivious to the continuing killing of civilians throughout Indochina by allied fire power and American saturation bombings. Senate liberals were not unaware of Communist atrocities and authoritarianism in Vietnam, but neither were they prepared to join pro-Nixon Senators in justifying on grounds of "conscience" the prolongation of a brutal struggle for a minority-based Saigon regime whose long-term commitment even to the forms of democratic rule was highly suspect.

ABOVE ALL, the President's supporters in the Senate opposed the McGovern-Hatfield amendment as an expression of what they termed a growing liberal neo-isolationism which would cost the United States its leadership of the world anti-Communist alliance system. To the liberal charge that it was the unwise and immoral commitment in Vietnam itself which had created neo-isolationism in America, pro-administration Senators insisted that the way to counter isolationism was not to further it but to support Nixon's efforts to withdraw with honor from Vietnam. In the view of Senator Dole:

> One of the forms this neo-isolationism has taken has been a growing unwillingness by some to bear with President Nixon while he brings the war in South Vietnam to a just and honorable conclusion—a conclusion which will—because it must—maintain America's credibility with all nations and strengthen the American people's faith in themselves. This means ending the war in such a way that South Vietnam is in a position to defend itself, in such a way that leaves our allies sure of our commitments to them, and in such a way that leaves our present and potential enemies equally sure that we will keep those commitments.

Senators Bennett, Tower, Hruska, Hansen, Goldwater, and Fong joined Dole in arguing that the complex interrelatedness of America's global commitments in the Middle East and elsewhere meant that the United States could retain credibility with its allies, and prevent aggressive miscalculations by either Russia or China, "only by permitting the President," in the words of Senator Fong, "to withdraw from Vietnam at a rate set with regard to the welfare of our troops and our allies—a rate that is responsible." President Nixon, for his part, has announced on several occasions his conviction that an American failure in Vietnam would have disastrous consequences for America's entire global alliance system and for world peace in general. In a major speech on May 14, 1969, Nixon claimed that a loss of American prestige and honor in Vietnam could fatally destabilize world politics by leading Com-

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munist powers to doubt America's will and to prefer confrontation to negotiation in relations with the United States around the world:

> A great nation cannot renege on its pledges. A great nation must be worthy of trust. When it comes to maintaining peace, "prestige" is not an empty word. I am not speaking of false pride or bravado—they should have no place in our policies. I speak rather of the respect that one nation has for another's integrity in defending its principles and meeting its obligations. If we simply abandoned our effort in Vietnam, the cause of peace might not survive the damage that would be done to other nations' confidence in our reliability. If Hanoi were to succeed in taking over South Vietnam by force—even after the power of the United States had been engaged—it would greatly strengthen those leaders who scorn negotiation, who adovocate aggression, who minimize the risks of confrontation with the United States. It would bring peace now but it would enormously increase the danger of a bigger war later.

In sum, what emerges from an examination of both Nixon's and his supporters' claims for the broader significance of the Vietnam settlement is a particularly expansive and globalist definition of America's role in world politics. The larger assumptions of this globalist vision, a vision shared by other defenders of protracted war in Indochina, such as George Liska and the Rostow brothers, are worth a closer examination if we are fully to understand what motivates the Nixon administration in Southeast Asia.*

The globalist perspective insists on the centrality of American power and prestige to the maintenance of a desirable world order. Concerned with far more than the security of the United States proper, or even the Western Hemisphere, proponents of the large policy insist that America must retain political and, if necessary, military access to every region of the world. Globalists assert that predictable and responsible imperial behavior by the United States will contain the rival power centers of Russia and China before their expansion, individual or collective, is permitted to reach proportions alarming enough to threaten the existing world balance of power and provoke a possible American overreaction. In this manner, too, nuclear confrontations with either Russia or China would be avoided since no crisis would be permitted to get that far out of hand. Moreover, if states such as Japan, India, Israel, West Germany, Brazil, Australia, and Indonesia can count on American support in the containment of the major Communist powers and their allies, then such nations will be less likely, the globalists infer, to seek their own nuclear armaments. American firmness is vital, then, in the large perspective, not only to contain powerful enemies at a tolerable level of conflict, but also sufficiently to reassure friends so that they do not succumb to internal chaos, neutralism, or world destabilizing independent policies of nuclear armament and militarism.

Japan's future role is especially critical for American global strategists. Somehow, Japan must be brought to anchor an Asian defense system without, at the same time, reverting to her former imperial role. W. W. Rostow has recently sketched out his hopes for Japan's role in a post-Vietnam Asia, an Asia almost identical to the Asia of Nixon's 1967 projection:

> If we patiently, painfully see it through to an honorable and stable peace in Southeast Asia, there is a decent hope that the Asia that emerges will not be dominated by any single power. It could be an Asia in which the inherent weight of mainland China is balanced by the cooperative efforts of those living in the great and vital arc from Seoul and Tokyo to Karachi and Teheran—an Asia not hostile to China but offering to it no temptation to expand—an Asia to whose multilateral efforts Japan could make an enormous contribution—an Asia where nuclear proliferation did not happen, where the guarantee of the United States remained good, but whose inherent strength and cooperation permitted us to fall back to a role of even-handed partnership across the Pacific.

In a similar vein White House officials briefing newsmen on August 25, 1970 argued that an important element in the President's motivation to maintain a presence in Asia was his concern that an American retreat might destabilize Japan. "According to this view," reported the New York *Times*, "if Japan concludes that the United States is no longer a force to be reckoned with in Asia, it may confront two choices: it may decide to assume America's role in Asia, involving a possible resurgence of Japanese militarism, or it may decide to join forces with the Communists." In either case, the stability and predictability which the globalist seeks would be challenged. Relatedly, the Citizens Committee for Peace with Freedom in Vietnam (headed, among others, by Omar Bradley, Dean Acheson, George Meany, and Lucius Clay) expressed concern in a policy statement sent to Nixon in late October, 1969, that an American humiliation in Vietnam would bring pressure on India, Japan, and Australia "to develop nuclear weapons for their own protection. With the proliferation of these weapons, the risks of miscalculation would grow and the chances of a Third World War would increase." Finally, in this context, it is worth recalling President Nixon's claim that a bloodbath in South Vietnam following upon a precipitate

* For the recent views of the Rostow brothers, see the interview with Eugene V. Rostow which appeared in the *New Yorker*, July 4, 1970 and the article by W. W. Rostow, "Why We Should Not Abandon Our Role in Asia," reprinted in the *Congressional Record*, June 30, 1970, p. S 10244. For George Liska's views, see his *War and Order, Reflections on Vietnam and History* (Johns Hopkins, 1968).

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American withdrawal would finish America so far as being "the peacekeeper in the Asian world is concerned." In the globalist mind, world order and American power are inseparable.

PROPONENTS of the large policy also fear that revolutionary wars of national liberation might spread throughout the Third World, shift the balance of world power, and dangerously destabilize international trade and political relations. In this view, an American failure to see the war in Vietnam through to an "honorable" peace would undercut American credibility in the underdeveloped world and encourage the use elsewhere of the tactics of revolutionary warfare which would have proven successful against the United States in Vietnam. The Citizens Committee for Peace with Freedom in Vietnam argued in a policy statement to the President that a premature American withdrawal from Vietnam would encourage revolutionary as opposed to evolutionary modes of modernization:

> Peaceful methods of social and economic change would be downgraded and violent methods encouraged. A huge part of the world would be increasingly vulnerable to Communist subversion and control. The effectiveness of the new "wars of liberation" would be confirmed. An open invitation to expanded use of the guerrilla technique of conquest would be extended to those contemplating aggression against their neighbors and ideological competitors.

Above all, the globalist mind connects the defense of world order with the maintenance of domestic stability in the United States itself. If the liberal supporters of the McGovern-Hatfield amendment blamed the polarizations in America on the war in Vietnam, many pro-Nixon Senators blamed the anti-war dissenters for the continuation of the war and insisted that radicalism was evidence of national decay. Conservative Senators warned against demoralization at home and sought to promote the notion of the cold war as a nationally unifying struggle for justice and liberty abroad. In Senator Allott's view, "the most vital challenge confronting American leaders is the task of making clear to the American people the parameters of this global conflict, and the task of nurturing the will for protracted defense of freedom." Senator Gurney of Florida spoke of the way in which a humiliating withdrawal from Vietnam would shake the confidence of Americans in themselves and as a nation with a mission to lead the free world. In criticizing McGovern-Hatfield, Senator Dole most succinctly expressed this conservative globalist emphasis on the primacy of foreign policy and the importance of internal cohesion for national strength:

> This new isolationism is taking a number of directions, none of them in the best interests of our country if we accept the premise that a nation's domestic, internal vitality is related to and fundamentally dependent upon that nation's strength and vigor in the international arena. This being so, we must strike the balance between spending for internal needs and spending for defense to insure that the United States can survive as a free nation in a world where all nations are not our friends.

Related to the broad perception of a symbiotic and mutually-reinforcing relationship between America's world leadership and the maintenance of ideological cohesion and internal order in the United States is the awareness on the part of proponents of the large policy of the importance of an American-inspired system of world order and openness to the continued health of the American capitalist economy. Globalist Eugene Rostow has asked rhetorically:

> What is our foreign policy about? Are we interested only in protecting ourselves against the risk of being invaded, or, as the world gets smaller and smaller, do we have an interest in trying to preserve what Senator Fulbright called a world of wide horizons, a world in which we can move around and trade and travel on a large scale, and, basically, live as we're living now?

Harry Magdoff has argued persuasively in his recent book, *The Age of Imperialism,* that this is a period in which the profit margins of America's largest firms are increasingly dependent on sales and investments abroad; a moment when the foreign market consumes 40 per cent of the output of America's farms, factories, and mines; when the United States as an industrial system is increasingly dependent on raw materials from abroad; and when foreign aid is used, among other purposes, to create markets for American goods and to orient Third World economies toward the values and the institutions of capitalism. In such a context, the globalist mind tends naturally to connect the dominant national security interests of the United States, i.e., the containment of Russian and Chinese power, with the related goal, vital to the health of American capitalism, of maintaining access to as much of the world as possible for an international capitalist system led by the United States. In short, world order encourages domestic prosperity and internal order.

Yet perhaps the most direct connection made by globalists between domestic and world order concerns their belief that only a strong international posture on the part of the United States can discourage political extremism at home. The Citizens Committee for Peace with Freedom in Vietnam reported to Nixon that in the event of an American defeat in Vietnam:

> There would be bitter recriminations here in the United States once the full significance of our defeat had been perceived. Prejudice, scapegoat-seeking, and intolerance would flourish. And the lesson of the success of violent guerrilla tactics to bring about change would not

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be lost on those who seek to use violence to effect social change here at home.

One might legitimately accuse the Citizens Committee of some indulgence in self-fulfilling prophecy in regard to their declared fear of a rightist reaction, but no doubt their fear of the Left was genuine. Similarly, George Liska has warned of the challenge that would come from emboldened black militants should the United States fail in Vietnam:

> The domestic implications of the controversy over Vietnam are equally important. The key domestic issue is the racial crisis. There is an interdependence between affirmation of American prestige and power vis-à-vis Hanoi and its allies and the prospect for a semi-orderly integration of American society in the face of Black Power. In the last resort, whatever order exists in the United States depends on the government's known will and ability to deal firmly with hostile force. A collapse of this reputation abroad would strengthen the appeal and increase the credibility of domestic advocates of violence as a safe and profitable way to "racial equality."

For his part, President Nixon has never been so explicit as Liska on the relationship between success in Vietnam and the maintenance of domestic order, but there is a passage in Nixon's 1967 *Foreign Affairs* article worth pondering:

> Dealing with Red China is something like trying to cope with the more explosive ghetto elements in our own country. In each case a potentially destructive force has to be curbed; in each case an outlaw element has to be brought within the law; in each case dialogues have to be opened; in each case aggression has to be restrained while education proceeds; and, not least, in neither case can we afford to let those now self-exiled from society stay exiled forever. We have to proceed with both an urgency born of necessity and a patience born of realism.

The analogy is extremely revealing: Nixon desires to isolate, control, and ultimately to coopt comparable revolutionary forces on both the domestic and global scenes into an American system of liberal capitalist stability at home and abroad. It is in this most general conservative context, then, of a fear of anarchic instability and a search for an American version of internal and external order, as well as in the more particular context of the events leading to the decision to intervene in Cambodia, that we should read the conclusion to President Nixon's speech of April 30 announcing the Cambodian incursion:

> My fellow Americans, we live in an age of anarchy, both abroad and at home. We see mindless attacks on all the great institutions which have been created by free civilizations in the last 500 years. Even here in the United States great universities are being systematically destroyed. Small nations all over the world find themselves under attack from within and without. If, when the chips are down, the world's most powerful nation, the United States of America, acts like a pitiful, helpless giant, the forces of totalitarianism and anarchy will threaten free nations and free institutions throughout the world. It is not our power, but our will and character that is being tested tonight.

SENATE LIBERALS were faced not only with the task of defending the McGovern-Hatfield amendment against counter-arguments about the specifics of America's role in Indochina, but also with the necessity of answering, implicitly or explicitly, the conservative globalist prescriptions for order at home and abroad advanced by the President and his Senate supporters. The latter effort was not made easier by the fact that liberal thought was in a period of painful transition from an earlier globalist stance of its own to a more limited, if not as yet very clearly defined, conception of America's role in the world. Between 1945 and 1965, roughly speaking, American liberalism had developed a vision of reform globalism which argued that liberal reform at home would strengthen the United States for its interrelated international tasks of containing the Sino-Soviet bloc and of providing a progressive liberal capitalist answer to the problems of underdevelopment in the Third World. Over the early cold-war years this ideology of reform globalism was able to unite on the fundamentals, if not always on the details, of foreign policy such diverse liberals as Harry Truman, Dean Acheson, Adlai Stevenson, Chester Bowles, John Kennedy, and Lyndon Johnson. As the Johnson administration continued to escalate the war in Vietnam in the late 1960's, however, liberal unity in foreign affairs disintegrated. Some liberals, like Acheson, Rusk, and the Rostows were not deterred from their earlier globalist vision and tended to find new allies among conservative Republican and Southern Democratic proponents of the large policy and to defend protracted war in Southeast Asia as the logical culmination of their earlier reform globalism. Other liberals, however, were horrified by Vietnam and were made aware by the war of the liberal-imperialist potential which had always been latent in their earlier position. These Left liberals began the search in the Senate and elsewhere for a different foreign policy, a search taking them from the struggle over the peace plank at the 1968 Democratic National Convention to the push for Cooper-Church and McGovern-Hatfield in the summer of 1970.

Liberal limitationists, as Charles Gati has characterized them to suggest that they are not isolationists in the traditional sense, have come to reject the central assumption of their earlier reform globalism—namely, the belief that activism abroad and reform at home were mutually rein-

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forcing. As we have seen, it is now the Senate supporters of President Nixon who emphasize the importance of foreign policy to the well-being and vitality of the United States, and vice versa. Thus, even if their domestic and international aims tend to be more conservative generally than were the goals of earlier reform globalists, it is nonetheless now the right-of-center political elements in America who have largely captured the global impulse. For their part, Senate liberals supporting McGovern-Hatfield invariably insisted that the United States had to choose either to play an extensive role in world politics or to solve the pressing domestic questions of health, education, race, urban decay, poverty, and ecology. This new insistence on national-priority choices has made the military budget an area for conflict between liberals and conservatives and, for the first time since the cold war began, liberals in Washington have been arguing for domestic reform instead of, and not as a support for, a globalist policy:

> The Indochina War has a direct effect on the allocation of resources in the American economy. The high cost of the war simply means that the government has less money for other programs. In addition, the measures that the Administration has adopted to stop inflation, without halting the war, determine in large part "who gets what" from national wealth and productivity.

Another way to put the matter is to note that while conservative globalists have sought to contain domestic unrest with minimal social programs and the rhetoric of national unity and strength, liberals have increasingly been prepared to solve domestic needs by a major reordering of national priorities beginning in Vietnam.

Conservative globalists have counterattacked against this liberal reversal on national priorities. George Liska, consistent advocate of an American empire and its domestic correlatives, unity and discipline, has argued that a successful imperialism would not reduce, but would actually enhance, the overall capacity of the United States to solve its internal problems:

> The pro-imperial emphasis, which is diametrically opposed, holds that the society's fund of resources is dynamic over a politically significant period of time; the resources and energies which are mobilized for action abroad are held to generate new and additional possibilities for simultaneous or subsequent domestic development. The expanded, imperial theater provides new roles and possibilities for adjusting competing claims; the condition is that the external effort must be pursued with skill and lucidity about its meaning.

W. W. Rostow has also sought to defend the primacy of foreign policy against the attacks of the liberal critics of globalism:

> I would put a question which every American must answer for himself, out of his knowledge of our country, its history, and its character: at home would the United States observe these consequences of its decision [i.e., to leave Vietnam precipitously] passively? Would it turn with energy and pride and unity to clean the air and water, deal with ghettos and racial inequality as it read of Hué-like slaughter in Vietnam and elsewhere; of an Asia thrown into chaos or worse; of a world seized by a proliferating nuclear arms race?

Finally, Eugene V. Rostow has suggested more broadly that if the United States should cease to play its globalist role abroad America would become a garrison state internally in response to being hemmed in and threatened from the outside. Fearing that an increasingly isolated America would become a militarized America, Eugene Rostow claimed that as the cold war developed:

> We gradually became aware of a national interest in achieving a new balance of power, which could permit us to survive pretty much in terms of our historic patterns. I like to turn Wilson's remark around: Wilson talked about making the world safe for democracy—we need a world in which American democracy would be safe at home. I don't think we could survive as a democratic nation if we were alone and isolated in a world of hostility, chaos, and poverty.

Senate liberals have tended to reverse E. V. Rostow's perspective and to agree with Senator Fulbright that "the continual prosecution of war is absolutely antithetical to the preservation of a democratic system." Liberal Senators insist that globalist policies were not preventing America from becoming a garrison state but, instead, such policies in Vietnam and elsewhere were tragically bringing American society close to the garrison state that globalism was designed to make unnecessary. If McGovern-Hatfield were to prevail, the liberals foresaw neither recriminations nor chaos at home but a "sense of renewal born of ending a divisive and hopeless war." Moreover, liberals believed that such a postwar national renewal could be sustained and reinforced as progressive answers were found to long-standing domestic problems.

In the international sphere, McGovern-Hatfield supporters denied that the options were as stark or the possibilities so threatening as the globalists held. In Southeast Asia, liberal Senators argued that even a unified Communist state in Vietnam would be likely to exhibit strong nationalism, to resist Chinese domination, and to be both unable and unwilling to generate much revolutionary enthusiasm in the surrounding states of Thailand, Malaya, and Indonesia. In the last analysis most Senate liberals probably agreed with Senator Mansfield's claim that the United States should not make it its policy to maintain a pro-Western Cambodia, or to fight directly for

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Thailand and South Vietnam because, when all was said and done, Southeast Asia was "not vital to the security of this nation." Beyond Southeast Asia the liberals saw a world made less unstable by the growth of Western European and Japanese strength, and by the evolution of non-Communist forms of nationalism in the Third World. Liberals also pointed to the ideological and power-political rivalry between Russia and China as further evidence that no single power was likely in the near future to be able to dominate the Eurasian land mass. In such a world, according to Senator Tydings, America no longer needed "the costly interventionist foreign and military policies formulated in the late 40's." In such a world it would presumably be safe for America to retrench and to concentrate its energies and resources to a far greater extent at home.

By the same token, however, liberal Senators were in no sense ready to embrace a completely isolationist perspective and advocate that America retire to a nuclear armed form of a pre-1939 fortress America. Senator Tydings was quick to add the following disclaimer to his statement calling for less costly interventionist policies:

> This does not mean that we are abandoning our allies and returning to a fortress-America posture. Our Navy and Air Force must be kept strong and prepared. We must continue to provide nations threatened by external aggression with a nuclear shield and with military and economic assistance when necessary. But the day is past when American boys can be called on to die in foreign conflicts that do not directly threaten the security of the United States.

Most McGovern-Hatfield supporters also argued that Vietnam was distracting the United States from more vital world trouble spots, like the Middle East, and agreed with Senator Bayh "that by committing the United States even further into this Asian quagmire the President, contrary to his own plan, has inadvertently restricted our options in other, more important areas of the world." Senator Goodell went even further in this direction as he sought to turn some of the globalist defenses of protracted war in Vietnam against their authors but, in so doing, revealed the extent of his own residual commitment to many globalist assumptions:

> On a global basis, the war has been weakening, not strengthening our influence and power. By tying down our resources, our military capacities, our energies and our attention to a futile and endless war in one corner of the world, it has drained our capacity to influence developments in Europe, in the Middle East, and elsewhere, and damaged our credibility and prestige in the view of our allies. Above all, the war has weakened us in the eyes of the world by dividing us internally. American power and resources were never in doubt—but our ability to utilize these capacities for global objectives has been placed in serious question by our profound internal split over Vietnam. And if it is our moral leadership with which we are concerned, this can only be enhanced by ending a war that the rest of the world largely regards as a futile and immoral effort to rescue a corrupt dictatorship.

Furthermore, with specific regard to Asia, Goodell's position was not that the United States should make no commitments and play no role in the Far Eastern power system. Instead he advised against unwise commitments to weak regimes such as those in Saigon and Phnom Penh:

> The way to influence in Asia does not lie in continuation of the war and the propping up of unpopular regimes in the face of the rising forces of nationalism. It lies, rather, in ending the war and forging strong economic and political links with independent and internally strong nations. We have much more to gain, for example, from improving our ties with Japan—now one of the world's leading industrial and economic powers—than in shoring up a sagging military dictatorship in Cambodia.

Clearly, then, Senator Goodell's differences with the globalists were in part differences of degree. Finally, when Senator Hatfield countered Vice President Agnew's charge that the McGovern-Hatfield amendment was isolationist, Hatfield showed the extent to which, albeit ambiguously, even he remained in favor of an extensive American role in world politics:

> It should hardly be necessary to counter the Vice President's description of the amendment as isolationist. We desire neither a rejection of America's international responsibilities nor a retreat into a domestic cocoon. Rather, we desperately need a prudent and humane exercise of American power which will aid people in their search for political institutions of their own choice, which will preserve and improve life rather than destroy it, which will make the world safer rather than endanger it. We are not saying that any use of American power is wrong, but in Vietnam it is both unnecessary and futile. A withdrawal from Vietnam would provide us once again with opportunity to wield moral and political power for peace in a divided world.

But what globalist would ever admit that he seeks more for the United States than the opportunity "to wield moral and political power for peace in a divided world"?

ONE MIGHT CONCLUDE that the foreign-policy debates between President Nixon's supporters and opponents in the Senate last summer concerned matters of degree rather than fundamentals. Senate liberals are obviously not averse to having America remain a global power, albeit a somewhat more circumspect one. It is also clear that liberal Senators were highly

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ambivalent about confronting the President directly on Vietnam or on constitutional questions. Moreover, if one remembers the hopes and passions of May, the liberals' harvest from their summer efforts appears poor indeed. Cooper-Church passed the Senate but was defeated in the House; McGovern-Hatfield did not even pass the Senate; and at this writing it seems that even with his adventuresomeness curbed, President Nixon will be free to carry out his Vietnamization policy at his own pace until 1972. Finally, and also to suggest that there may not have been all that much at stake in the Senate debate, it should be noted that Presidential adviser Henry Kissinger, a strong advocate of protracted war in Indochina, has been indicating in recent press briefings an anti-globalist approach to a post-Vietnam world which Senator Fulbright himself would be hard put to fault. TRB in the *New Republic* summed it up as follows:

> Then Super-Briefer [Kissinger] gives the editors a look at the new trimmed-down, economy-size foreign policy. What is it? The US is going out of the business of providing security for the entire (non-Communist) world, that's what. We can't sustain such a burden anymore, says Super-Briefer, it's too much for our psychological resources. Indochina, thousands of miles away, has torn apart the US's domestic fabric. He adds that it's probably too much for our physical resources, too. That presumably refers to those gloomy reports that this year's federal budget may show a $10 billion deficit. So the Nixon doctrine, enunciated on Guam in July 1969 to apply to Asia, is being extended to the rest of the world. America, the editors are told, is going low-profile. Not all at once; there will be sidestepping and ambiguity; but the general trend will be toward disengagement. The US will honor treaty obligations with specific nations. It will defend a non-nuclear attacked by a nuclear. But a nation that meets neither test —Cambodia, for instance, and there are lots of others—will have to defend itself. US weapons and supplies, maybe, but no American troops.

Considering everything, therefore, one might simply conclude that nothing important was really involved amidst all the sound and fury in Washington since the events of May. But such a conclusion would be an error.

The very fact that they remained so ambivalent about American power and prestige only heightens the moral significance of the action of those thirty-nine liberal Senators who did vote for McGovern-Hatfield. Is it not probable that many liberals had moments of doubt as the globalists predicted international and domestic chaos following upon a Congressionally-forced American withdrawal from Vietnam? Nevertheless, when the time for choice came, most Senate liberals decided that on the grounds of social needs at home and of simple human decency the vicious circle of globalist assumptions perpetuating the cruel struggle in Vietnam had to be broken at this point. It would appear, then, that long before men will abandon entirely a general world view such as globalism they will abandon it in those specific instances in which consistency would involve intolerable prudential and moral costs.

American liberals have clearly reached such a point in relation to the Vietnam war, but even after Vietnam America's world role will have to be defined and hard choices made. Careful thought will have to be given to the relationship between the effort to create and maintain a more humane society in America and the nature of possible global environments which might inhibit or enhance such an effort. Such questions are not easy. They involve consideration of possible American sacrifices of security, prestige, and prosperity in the interests of progressive social change in the Third World. They involve consideration as well of the subtle relationship between the principles of justice and order in both international and American politics. Those of us who hope that liberalism will win the confidence of the majority of Americans, and gain the right to govern in the 1970's, must also hope that liberals will address these issues with wisdom and compassion. America's conservatives are waiting with answers of their own.

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In Hitler's Service

Lucy S. Dawidowicz

THE ABLEST and "least corrupted" member of Hitler's court—thus did H. R. Trevor-Roper characterize Albert Speer, Hitler's architect and wartime Minister of Armaments. Sentenced at Nuremberg to twenty years' imprisonment for his use of concentration-camp labor and his deportation of foreign workers, released from prison in 1966, Speer is now one of the last survivors of Hitler's court. His recently published memoirs* present a view of that court—its routine commonplaces and its diabolic intrigues—that no other work has yet offered.

By family background and upbringing, Speer would not have seemed a likely candidate for Hitler's retinue. He was born in Wilhelmine Germany (Mannheim, 1905) into wealth and high social status. His father and grandfather were architects. Politics at home were liberal, his father was an eager subscriber to the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. Speer attended the best private schools, read poetry, enjoyed music, climbed German mountains and paddled German rivers. In 1927 he received his architect's license from the Institute of Technology in Berlin and the following spring, at twenty-three, became the Institute's youngest teaching assistant.

The Berlin Institute was meanwhile becoming a center of Nazi propaganda and activity. In 1930 Speer's students persuaded him to attend a student meeting where he heard Adolf Hitler speak. The experience turned out to be decisive. A few weeks later Speer applied to the Nazi party for membership and in January 1931 he was accepted. His activity as a Nazi began with an unpaid assignment to decorate district party headquarters in Berlin; then he did Goebbels's ministry and home. In July 1933 came another critical juncture in Speer's life, the assignment to design the architectural background for the first party rally in Nuremberg. Hitler himself approved Speer's sketches at a brief impersonal encounter, during which it appears he took a liking to the young architect; soon thereafter Hitler recommended that Speer assist Paul Ludwig Troost in redoing the Chancellor's residence in Berlin. The rest followed swiftly. Invited into the inner circle, Speer was seated at Hitler's side at dinner; at twenty-eight, he had been propelled into the very center of power in Germany. Remembering that period, Speer writes: "For the commission to do a great building, I would have sold my soul like Faust. Now I had found my Mephistopheles."

Speer spent much of the next eight years in Hitler's company—he became his personal architect after Troost's death in 1933—satisfying Hitler's megalomania by designing buildings and monuments of monstrous proportions for the Thousand Year Reich. Once the war began, Speer naturally became involved in the problems of the entire German construction industry and developed a working relationship with Fritz Todt, Minister of Armaments and Munitions. In February 1942, after Todt's death in a mysterious plane crash, and a month before Speer's thirty-seventh birthday, Hitler appointed him as Todt's successor. In September 1943, his authority was expanded; he became Minister of Armaments and War Production, one of Nazi Germany's most powerful men.

WHAT KIND of man was Speer? The portrait that emerges from his memoirs discloses ambition and haughtiness, with talents that matched the avarice of his ambition and the indulgence of his egotism. Even as an inexperienced young man, unfamiliar with the exercise of power and dazzled by his own swift elevation, Speer contrived to keep apart from the other members of Hitler's court. His origins, his class, his education combined to make him contemptuous of the stupid, the bunglers, the blunderers. Besides, Hitler had chosen him personally. Speer now says that he was not interested in politics. He was an architect, an artist. He was admitted into Hitler's entourage not as a Nazi, not as a politician seeking power, but on his own merit, so to speak. For years he stood aside from the court intrigues, detached and superior. Only after he became a minister did he take part—for the good of Germany, he asserts—in the Byzantine machinations of the court.

Speer's self-esteem, his need to stand apart from, and above, the other Nazi leaders was manifest even at the Nuremberg trial. Whereas the other defendants chose to shift blame for the acts of Nazi Germany to the now dead and vanished, Speer, dissociating himself from Hitler's entourage, publicly assumed a share of responsibility (although like the others he pleaded "not guilty"). His assumption of responsibility reflects not only the creditable pride inherent in an attitude of *noblesse oblige*, but also, I believe, Speer's lifelong ambition to appear more honorable than his colleagues, to appear, indeed, *the* most honorable of the Nazi leaders.

Speer emerges from his memoirs above all as Hitler's man, eagerly submissive to that indescribable yet irresistible magnetism, until the very end elated by Hitler's praise and distressed by his reproaches. If Hitler had had the

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* *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs*, Macmillan, 597 pp., $12.50.

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capacity for friendship, Speer said at Nuremberg, he would have been his friend. The only place in his memoirs where Speer reveals his emotions is in the account of his reaction to news of Hitler's death—news that he had been expecting. Unpacking his suitcase, he found Hitler's framed portrait: "When I stood the photograph up, a fit of weeping overcame me."

Not before February 1945 did Speer begin to realize that in defeat Hitler was prepared to let Germany be destroyed, historic buildings and all.* Only then did he begin to extricate himself from Hitler's mesmeric power. In the last cataclysmic days of the war he rushed about Germany, countermanding Hitler's scorched-earth policy, trying to salvage what could be salvaged of Germany's industry and transportation as a basis for postwar survival. On April 16, 1945, he wrote an appeal to the German people—never delivered out of a still lingering loyalty to Hitler—to put a halt to Hitler's destructive policies. The appeal concluded:

> The military blows which Germany has received during the last few months have been shattering. Our fate is no longer in our own hands. Only a more merciful Providence can change our prospects for the future. We ourselves, however, can help save ourselves not only by going about our work industriously, facing the enemy with dignity and self-confidence, but also by becoming more modest in our hearts, by practicing self-criticism, and by believing unshakably in the future of our nation, which will remain forever and always.

That was Speer's personal credo. The course he wanted Germany to choose was one he chose for himself. His memoirs are a vehicle for self-criticism, practiced in the mode of emotional austerity. "My moral failure," he concludes the memoirs, "is not a matter of this item or that; it resides in my active association with the whole course of events." No confessional repentance. No plea for forgiveness. No "fit of weeping."

What of the Jews and the Final Solution? Speer says that he did not know. But not quite. In an exercise of Ciceronian preterition Speer says he will no longer say that he did not know even though "it is true that I did not know what was really beginning on November 9, 1938 [*Kristallnacht*], and what ended in Auschwitz and Maidanek." He himself was no anti-Semite nor did he ever become one, Speer writes, but "Hitler's hatred for the Jews seemed to me so much a matter of course that I gave it no serious thought." Yet hardly any of Hitler's anti-Semitic remarks remained in his memory: "In those hundreds of tea-times . . . Hitler scarcely ever said anything about the Jews, about his domestic opponents, let alone about the necessity of setting up concentration camps." As a matter of fact, Hitler's published table-talk indicates that he said a lot about the Jews. Perhaps Speer did not listen, shutting out of his awareness first those spoken words, later those overt acts of the *Kristallnacht* that he himself characterized as "the vulgar business of carrying out a policy proclaimed in the anti-Semitic slogans printed on streamers over the entrances to towns." He was too fastidious for such "vulgar business." Yet it is strange that he heard nothing in 1942 and 1943 of the talk in Hitler's court about the fate of the Jews, even though Goebbels, in his diary, recorded such conversations, and on days when Speer was present.

At Nuremberg, Justice Jackson cross-examined Speer about his use of slave labor and his knowledge of anti-Jewish policies. "I knew that the National Socialist party was anti-Semitic, and I knew that the Jews were being evacuated from Germany," Speer replied, denying further knowledge or complicity. When asked what he did know, Speer testified that when he took office in February 1942, the party was demanding the removal of Jews still working in armaments factories. Because he desperately needed labor, Speer convinced Party Secretary Bormann to issue a circular permitting Jews to continue at this work and extending protection to their employers from political denunciation. That situation lasted until September or October 1942, Speer said, when Hitler "insisted emphatically" that the Jews be removed, and gave orders to that effect. Still, Speer managed to keep the Jews on in factories until March 1943, when they "finally did have to get out." This admission was elicited by a document presented by the prosecution, in the form of a letter written by Fritz Sauckel, Plenipotentiary for the Allocation of Labor, Speer's colleague under Hitler and his co-defendant at Nuremberg.† The letter read:

> At the end of February, the Reichsführer SS [Himmler], in agreement with myself and the Reich Minister for Armaments and Munitions, for reasons of state security, has removed from the places of work all Jews who were still working freely and not in camps, and either transferred them to a labor corps or collected them for removal.

A year later, just two weeks after the German intervention in Hungary, Speer asked for 100,000 Hungarian Jews as forced laborers. Hungary was then the only country where Jews still survived in substantial numbers. (He must surely have known then, however dimly, that the European Jews had undergone some terrible fate.) In a letter to Hitler arguing his case, Speer complained that Sauckel was unwilling to use the Hungarian Jews. Although conceding that the presence of Jews was disturbing also to him personally, Speer emphasized that this was an emergency, and that since the Jews were in concentration camps, using them would not offend the sensibility of the German people.**

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* Speer himself was not without a streak of nihilism. Berlin set aflame by Allied air raids entranced him: "No doubt about it, this apocalypse provided a magnificent spectacle."

† Implicated in the misuse of Jewish concentration-camp inmates, Sauckel was hanged in Nuremberg prison, October 16, 1946.

** From a Speer file, Bundesarchiv of Koblenz, summarized in Eugene Davidson, *The Trial of the Germans: Nuremberg 1945-46* (1966), p. 497.

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In his memoirs Speer recalls that his old friend Karl Hanke, then Gauleiter of Lower Silesia, warned him in the summer of 1944 never, under any circumstances, to accept an invitation to a concentration camp in Upper Silesia. "He had seen something there which he was not permitted to describe and moreover could not describe." Speer now believes that his friend was referring to Auschwitz, and he criticizes himself for not having tried to find out what was happening there.

Auschwitz served two competitive but also mutually reinforcing purposes, mass murder and slave labor. The slave labor installation was the I. G. Farben Buna works, designated as Auschwitz III (Auschwitz I was the base camp; Auschwitz II was the main killing center). Of the 35,000 slave laborers who were brought there, at least 25,000 died: a worker's life expectancy ranged from one to four months. Extant documents show that Speer knew a lot about Auschwitz III. If he knew nothing of Auschwitz II, he had developed a highly protective mechanism of denial.

Both mass murder and slave labor were in the jurisdiction of the SS, under Himmler. Mass murder was an enterprise of the SS Security Department, headed by Reinhard Heydrich and, after his assassination, by Ernst Kaltenbrunner.* Slave labor was the business of the SS Economic and Administrative Department, headed by Oswald Pohl.† In the normal course of his work Speer had frequent contacts with Pohl and one of his staff, Hans Kammler, head of the construction division.** Kammler had distinguished himself by fanatical ambition in all his undertakings: he had built the installations at Auschwitz—the gas chambers, the synthetic rubber plant (Buna works), the sewage system. Speer remarks that in both career and methodology Kammler was his mirror image, and that he "rather liked his objective coolness." But Speer omits to say anything about his conference with Pohl and Kammler on September 15, 1942, or about developments thereafter.‡

The SS, always ambitious to extend its enterprises, had put two items on the agenda for this conference: enlarging the camp at Auschwitz III in view of the "eastern migration" (this was at the peak of the mass deportations from Poland), and "taking over complete armament tasks of major proportions by the concentration camps." As to the first item, Speer approved the purchase of building materials to construct 300 barracks for 132,000 inmates. As to the second, which was more complicated, Speer at first thought the SS Security Department should take some 50,000 Jews out of the free economy and send them into concentration camps. But nothing came of the whole plan because Speer later decided, after an inspection tour of the Mauthausen concentration camp, that the SS construction plans were too extravagant. On April 5, 1943, Speer wrote to Himmler that since he could not supply the necessary building materials, the SS should henceforth apply the principle of *Primitivbauweise* ("primitive construction")—meaning that concentration-camp inmates should work with their bare hands and cheap materials. In a later letter, Speer complained to Himmler about the inefficiency of slave labor: the inmates were dropping dead too fast, particularly in Auschwitz.

In December 1943, Speer tells us, he visited an SS plant using slave labor in an underground installation where the V-2 rockets were to be produced. The prisoners' conditions were "barbarous," Speer confesses, "and a sense of profound involvement and personal guilt seizes me whenever I think of them." Since the prisoners were quartered in damp caves, Speer says he ordered barracks built on a hill and he urged the SS camp commandant to improve the food and sanitary conditions. His *Office Journal* for that day read:

> On the morning of December 10 the minister [Speer] went to inspect a new plant in the Harz Mountains. Carrying out this tremendous mission drew on the leaders' last reserves of strength. Some of the men were so affected that they had to be forcibly sent off on vacations to restore their nerves.

The prisoners suffered because they were being killed by hunger, abuse, and overwork. The observers suffered because of the tension between their guilt (knowing wrong) and their complicity (doing wrong) in the prisoners' sufferings. The dissociation in Speer's *Office Journal* between the prisoners' sufferings and the observers' sufferings (and between the remedies for both) is a common neurotic reaction caused by the conflict of conscience over the commission of or participation in a forbidden act.

THE London *Observer*, in 1944, characterized Speer as the "very epitome of the 'managerial revolution,'" symbolizing the "pure technician . . . with no other original aim than to make his way in the world and no other means than his technical and managerial ability." It is the image in which Speer has chosen to cast himself—the technician, without politics, without loyalties, morally neutral, devoted only to his machines and his technical tasks. It seems to me, however, to be an incomplete and self-serving portrait. In the case of Speer, it is cited to insulate him from the emotional shock of Nuremberg and to obscure the roots of his attraction to the Nazi movement, his passionate attachment to Hitler, and, finally, his profound love for his counry.

In his final statement at Nur-

* One of Speer's co-defendants, hanged in Nuremberg prison, October 16, 1946.

† Condemned to death in the trial of the Concentration-Camp Central Administration at Nuremberg, November 3, 1947; executed June 8, 1951.

** Speer describes Heydrich and Kammler as if they were twin Rover boys: "Both Reinhard Heydrich and Hans Kammler were blond, blue-eyed, long-headed, always neatly dressed, and well bred." Speer says that he never read *Mein Kampf*, but he must have learned from Hans F. K. Gunther's *Rassenkunde* that the cephalic index of the Nordic race was around 75, that is, long-headed.

‡ For sources and analysis, as for so much else about the German machinery for the destruction of the Jews, I am indebted to Raul Hilberg's monumental work, *The Destruction of the European Jews*.

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emberg, Speer turned modern technology into an accomplice of the Hitler regime. Hitler's dictatorship, he said, was the first to have "made complete use of all technical means in a perfect manner for the domination of its nation." The radio and the loudspeaker, he charged, deprived eighty million people of independent thought—the most exaggerated claim yet made for the mass media. And he warned: "Today the danger of being terrorized by technocracy threatens every country in the world." Thus was technology made to share responsibility with German leadership for crimes against humanity.

To be sure, technical advances and scientific discoveries have increased the probabilities for human destruction in general. But in thinking about how the Jews were killed, one marvels less at the sophisticated technical facilities (there were none) available to the murderers than at human determination: Heydrich's mobile killing battalions murdered about one million Jews with rifles and machine guns alone. Nor can it be claimed that the installations at Auschwitz, Belzec, or Maidanek represented a significant technological innovation, scientifically speaking. Not the craft of the machine, but the cunning of the mind was responsible for Nazi Germany's rationalized and bureaucratic system of murder.

An incisive portrait of Speer as technician appears also in a gallery of eighteen character portraits, from Hitler to Rudolf Hoess, the commandant of Auschwitz, brilliantly drawn by Joachim C. Fest, a German journalist.* These portraits adroitly combine history, biography, and psychology. The aim of the book, Fest tells us, is the description and analysis of "pychological structures." Fest believes that his subjects were impelled toward politics not by an overwhelming idea, but by psychological conflict, and that the ideological construction which they erected obscured this fact. "They were," Fest declares, "all concerned not so much to realize a dream of the future as to work off an instinctual urge." This variant on the theme of sublimation could apply of course with equal validity to men attracted to Communism or to any other political movement.

Fest holds up to view a cohort of misfits, megalomaniacs, obsessives, fanatics, sadists, and split personalities, distinguished (if that is the word) by mediocrity, stupidity, and incompetence. The intellectual and ideological elements coexisting in these "psychological structures" of the Nazi leaders and in the Nazi movement are understated, and consequently, the specificity of Nazism becomes blurred. Fest characterizes his subjects as practitioners, technicians, or functionaries of "totalitarian rule." Never disclaiming the German nature of Nazism, he nevertheless often subsumes it under an ostensibly generic classification—totalitarianism.

Fest's use of totalitarianism, like Speer's use of technology, serves to reduce the enormity of Nazi Germany's criminality by diluting it with theoretical and abstract ideas of universal application. As with Speer, the specific nature of Germany's deeds becomes universalized into an abstract concept, and ultimately is explained away into nothingness.

Were the Nazi leaders in fact such misfits? Fest's psychological magnifying glass, merciless in its brilliance, exposes every pustule and deformity. (How well would leaders of other governments and movements fare under such scrutiny?) But in political practice the delusions, obsessions, mania, hysteria, deceit, and duplicity were often eclipsed by brains, ambition, determination, skill, and the capacity for imaginative leadership. Except for Ribbentrop, the champagne salesman turned diplomat, and Alfred Rosenberg, the ideologue manqué, Hitler's entourage was on the whole rather impressive (Speer's personal strictures notwithstanding). Goering—at least before he succumbed to the corruptions of pleasure—Goebbels, Himmler, Heydrich, Bormann were men of high ability, if no morality. They shared—aside from the will to power, the belief in force, and the commandment to permanent revolution—a hodgepodge of ideas on the superiority of the Germans, the inferiority of the Slavs, and the exterminability of the Jews.

The criminal acts of the Nazi state were not in the first place the consequence of technology or the outcome of psychological conflicts and failure, but rather the systematic realization of deeply-held beliefs by men who had mastered their weaknesses and prevailed over the values of the religion and tradition in which they had been reared. By our standards and values the Final Solution was insane as well as criminal, but those Germans who dedicated themselves to its execution regarded it as the highest idealism in the service of their nation. That body of beliefs, the core of Nazi doctrine—according to which the Germans were destined to rule the world and the Jews, their arch-enemy, were destined for destruction (originally conceived apocalyptically rather than historically)—shaped and animated Nazi leadership and the Nazi state.

The SS more than any other institution in the Third Reich exemplified the bond between ideology, a shared set of beliefs and values, and power, as Heinz Höhne shows in his massive study, *The Order of the Death's Head: The Story of Hitler's SS*.† From Himmler down to the SS private, from the intellectuals and university students (mostly in law) down to the farm boys just off the land, from the technocrats, economists, and blue-blood elites down to the plebeian riffraff and thugs inherited from the old *Frei Korps* and SA, all SS men shared—or were indoctrinated and trained to share—an outlook, a mentality, a set of beliefs. At the core was loyalty to the Führer, obedience unto death. SS training consisted not so much of theoretical learning as of character building and basic teaching about the enemy: "Jewry," "Bolshevism," the "Eastern sub-humans." The SS man was taught that he must learn to be a fighter for fighting's sake;

* *The Face of the Third Reich: Portraits of the Nazi Leadership*, Pantheon, 402 pp., $10.00.

† Coward-McCann, 690 pp., $12.50.

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to obey unquestioningly; to be "hard"—not only inured to, but impervious to, all human emotions; to be contemptuous of "inferior beings" and arrogant toward those not in the SS, but to show comradeship to fellow SS members.* Murder committed in fulfillment of the SS mission was regarded not as murder, but as duty in the service of the Führer, as idealism. The concentration-camp system and the rhythm of mass extermination, writes Höhne, were not dictated by sadists, but by "worthy family men brought up in the belief that anti-Semitism was a form of pest control."

We know now the power that belief exerted over the deeds of worthy family men. Himmler came to rule over a dominion of death. He built a vast economic empire that enriched his country by scavenging from the murdered and enslaving the yet-to-be murdered. Speer, the worthiest of family men, exploited Himmler's human resources as he would mineral resources, that is, without humane or ethical considerations. For having done so he spent twenty years in prison, acknowledged his responsibility, and admitted his guilt. The case, it appears, is closed.

But not quite. In his memoirs, pondering the *Kristallnacht,* Speer asks himself: "Did I sense that this outburst of hoodlumism was changing my moral substance?" His answer: "I do not know." This not-knowing, this moral uncertainty—so uncharacteristic of Speer in other areas—suggests that he has, even now, not yet come to terms with the question German/Jew. It suggests further that in pondering such larger terms as totalitarianism, technology, or the nature of mass psychological aberration, we would do well to recall, as against Speer, the moral certainty and absolute conviction of those who put the question German/Jew at the center of their concerns. At any rate, what remains most stubbornly in my own mind after reading Speer,

* See Hans Buchheim in *Anatomy of the SS State* (Walker, 1968), especially pp. 320-21. His two studies in that volume, "The SS—Instrument of Domination" and "Command and Compliance," are the most penetrating analyses of the SS that I have read.

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Fest, and Höhne, and after brooding over all these larger and smaller terms, is a speech by Heinrich Himmler (cited by Fest) to SS group leaders at Poznan in October 1943, when most European Jews had already been murdered:

> It is absolutely wrong to project our own harmless soul with its deep feelings, our kindheartedness, our idealism, upon alien peoples. . . .
>
> One principle must be absolute for the SS man: we must be honest, decent, loyal, and comradely to members of our own blood and to no one else. What happens to the Russians, what happens to the Czechs, is a matter of utter indifference to me. Such good blood of our own kind as there may be among the nations we shall acquire for ourselves, if necessary by taking away the children and bringing them up among us. Whether the other peoples live in comfort or perish of hunger interests me only insofar as we need them as slaves for our culture; apart from that it does not interest me. Whether or not 10,000 Russian women collapse from exhaustion while digging a tank ditch interests me only insofar as the tank ditch is completed for Germany. We shall never be rough or heartless where it is not necessary; that is clear. We Germans, who are the only people in the world who have a decent attitude to animals, will also adopt a decent attitude to these human animals, but it is a crime against our own blood to worry about them and to bring them ideals.
>
> I shall speak to you here with all frankness of a very serious subject. We shall now discuss it absolutely openly among ourselves, nevertheless we shall never speak of it in public. I mean the evacuation of the Jews, the extermination of the Jewish people. It is one of those things which it is easy to say. "The Jewish people is to be exterminated," says every party member. "That's clear, it's part of our program, elimination of the Jews, extermination, right, we'll do it." And then they all come along, the eighty million good Germans, and each one has his decent Jew. Of course the others are swine, but this one is a first-class Jew. Of all those who talk like this, not one has watched, not one has stood up to it. Most of you know what it means to see a hundred corpses lying together, five hundred, or a thousand. To have gone through this and yet—apart from a few exceptions, examples of human weakness—to have remained decent, this has made us hard. This is a glorious page in our history that has never been written and never shall be written.

Movie Chronicle

William S. Pechter

FROM THE moment Mick Jagger's fat lips form themselves inexpressively around the words, "This is how they shall remember me," one knows one is in With-It Land. The short black-and-white sequence with which the film begins ends with the title, "The End," and the film proper, in color, begins with the title, "The Beginning." There are no characters in With-It Land, only pretty pictures. The camera zooms, or does a little bit of slow motion, or fast, or a bit of hand-held jiggling, or some soft focus and halations. People romp playfully, splashing each other by a stream in their childlike innocence; horses or cattle are caught in picturesque poses. You may find yourself unthinkingly lighting up a cigarette, or starting to hum "Raindrops Keep Falling on My Head" (that is, if you can find any space for this latter in between the all but nonstop ersatz folk ballads on the soundtrack). During a few particularly striking shots, you may find yourself searching the screen for the legend, "Smirnoff Vodka." The whole thing ends, of course, on the obligatory frame in stop-motion.

It is called *Ned Kelly*, and in it, under Tony Richardson's gossamer hand, Mick Jagger, whose enlightened good works include hiring Hell's Angels to keep order at the Altamont rock festival, gets to enact the charade of his being a romantic, revolutionary outlaw in old Australia; shooting it out with the cops (or "pigs" as they are at one point called, in a bold stroke of contemporary relevance), but basically, you are to understand from his proto-hippie beard and garb, a flower child, who only fires when fired upon. Aha, Bonnie and Clyde again, you may think, and, well, yes, you wouldn't be far wrong. But the effect is rather of an up-to-date version of one of those Clan movies, in which Frank Sinatra and his buddies are allowed to act out their fantasies of themselves as tough guys, heisting a casino in Las Vegas or riding with the French Foreign Legion. In assisting at an operation such as this, there is only a thin line between the role of director and pander, but, whatever one is to call him, there can be no mistaking that the famous Tony Richardson touch is everywhere. Like all such generalizations, the following is faulty, but whenever, while watching a film, you are consistently unsure of the spatial relations among the things you see, or of the dimensions of the area in which the action takes place, etc., I suggest that you at least suspect the presence of an incompetent filmmaker. In *Ned Kelly*, you may be unsure of a good deal more. At one point, uncertain that the bedmate to whom Ned was bidding farewell (unwilling that she should share his life of a hunted animal, etc.) was the girl with whom we see him in an earlier episode, I turned to the obviously greatly affected young lady sitting next to me to ask if it was, in fact, the same person and/or the girl we see Ned marrying in prison in the black and white prologue. "What does it matter?" she replied; the implication, as I understood it, being that

WILLIAM S. PECHTER *writes on movies regularly in these pages.*

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this was the archetypal separation of teen-age rebel from his sweetheart by that world they never made. And, of course, in this film, she was right; it didn't matter at all. Perhaps the one compelling moment in *Ned Kelly* is Mick Jagger's on-screen rendition of "The Wild Colonial Boy" (he does not sing the background score), and even then what moved me most was my memory of first hearing the song in *The Quiet Man*, and the heartrending realization that I was seeing this film and not that one.

Performance continues the saga of Mick Jagger, movie star, and is a *heavy* trip in both current and classic senses of the word. This time we get to see him in his satanic guise, and those who were reduced to fear and trembling by the transcendental terror of "Paint It Black" and Sympathy for the Devil" are advised to take all necessary precautions. Others are likely to find *Performance* of clinical interest only, as the most advanced case of evil-in-the-head since that closing party in *The Servant* or the time Natalie Wood was driven mad by lust in *Splendor in the Grass*. (To be honest, I must admit that I rather enjoyed the beginning of the film as a kind of mod *Untouchables*, especially insofar as James Fox is allowed some opportunity to act—but then I love *Splendor in the Grass*, and I know that it's bad.) In the way of blackness, the Rolling Stones hit their stride with the heartfelt misogyny of "Stupid Girl" and "Under My Thumb," and have never surpassed that mark except in the categories of ambition and pretension. As for the artistic evocation of a genuine, quotidian terror, their entire *oeuvre* laid end to end (and I throw in this film, which, given that directorial chores are shared, is perhaps best treated as a collective fantasy with Mick Jagger as its focus) cannot equal "A Day in the Life," and the Beatles song is beautiful to boot.

THERE WOULD BE little point in talking about John Huston's *The Kremlin Letter* at this late date, if it were not that the film has found so little favor. Even Pauline Kael, who, out of old affection, has been back-breakingly generous to Huston for over a decade, turned her back on this one. And yet, occasionally bad and generally silly as the film is, it seems to me also the first of Huston's in more than a decade to connect in a meaningful way with his work before; that work which once seemed to bespeak one of the most distinctive and exciting talents in the American film. *The Kremlin Letter* is silly enough on its surface, with its *Mission Impossible* convolutions and its antiquated attempt to create an ambience of modern iniquity, that one may fail to notice underneath the classic Huston tale of the gathering together of a band of skilled professionals on a quest which fails. The spy-story twists and the depravity are *The Kremlin Letter*'s thinly spread surface chic; underneath—rather amazingly, given the duration of their absence—run the preoccupations of *The Maltese Falcon* and *The Asphalt Jungle*.

That *The Kremlin Letter* does manage to display some of the same commitments, if not the qualities, of those earlier films is even more remarkable, given such additional liabilities as the flat, monotonous performance of Patrick O'Neal in the (anti-) hero's role (one can only imagine the difference to the film a Patrick McGoohan might have made in the part), and a plot at once impenetrable and full of holes. Some thrillers, like *The Big Sleep*, or *Kiss Me Deadly*, have plots whose opacity achieves a kind of meaning; others, like Huston's own *The Asphalt Jungle*, or Kubrick's homage to it, *The Killing*, achieve a clarity and precision in the unfolding of their complex narratives which suggest the operation of an intricate clockwork or some finely meshed gears. *The Kremlin Letter* achieves neither, and yet its basic materials of the existential quest do manage to engage a certain long-lacking seriousness and conviction on the part of the director, and, almost by sheer reason of this, some of their old force. What the film does have also is a quartet of impeccably polished performers in George Sanders, Nigel Green, Orson Welles, and Richard Boone, the last well on his way to becoming one of the screen's most enjoyable gargoyles, and some of Huston's most taut, least flabby direction since he gave himself over to Celebrity some sixteen years ago; at the minimum, in this film, when a door opens, it opens onto an apartment, or whatever, which exists with a certain depth and dimension. Preposterous as the plot twists are, the film has at least the wit to play its material straight rather than alibi-out as another facetious spoof. And, if the film's vision of the abyss is mainly on the level of that party in *The Servant* (or the whole of *Performance*), there is still some considerable charge detonated by its final seconds, via a vicious little note as nihilistically annihilating of sense as that which concludes *Beat the Devil*, but without that film's accompanying reprise of the closing laughter of *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre*.

OF COURSE, John Huston is in decline, and, in itself, *The Kremlin Letter* is hardly substantial enough to alter the course or even cushion the fall. American directors are usually in and out of decline, but there are declines and declines, and Huston's is a prodigy; in the strict, classical purity of its prolonged downward movement, perhaps unrivaled even in the decline-crammed annals of the cinema. Yet it is still worth saying, and especially now that it is so much more difficult to say, that, once, John Huston was good, and sometimes much better than good. To attempt to fix the causes of so spectacular a squandering of talent would require more detail than I am able to offer here, but I would tentatively suggest that the deterioration has had much to do with Huston's growing self-consciousness of his reputation as a serious artist, and his increasingly desperate efforts to satisfy the demands thought to attend Artistic Seriousness. Once, Huston's films were alive with a certain hard if not deep intelligence, and an intense if narrow vision. Once, he took his stories from Dashiell Hammett and W. R. Burnett, and impressed his own dark meanings on them; now he takes his meanings from Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams,

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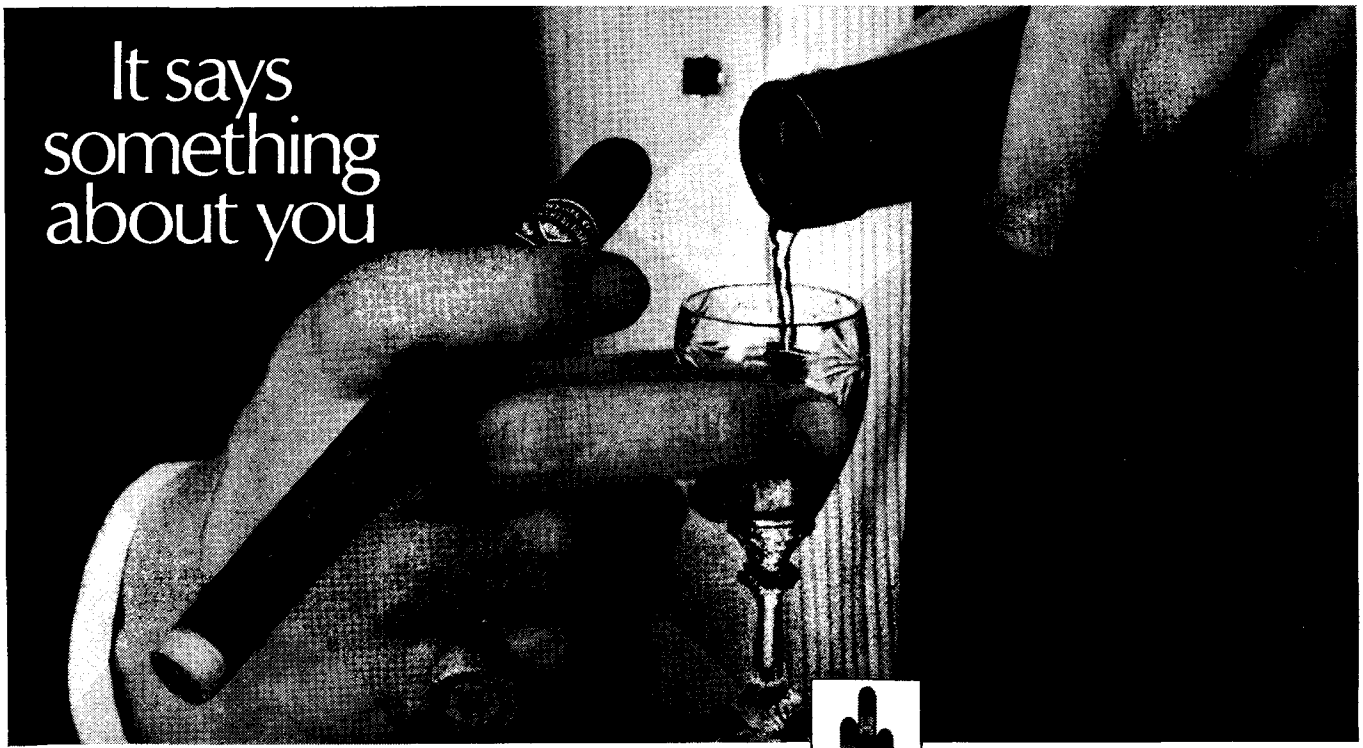
and flounders helplessly in the absence of a story. Now he commissions Sarte to do a screen treatment of the life of Freud, films *The Bible,* and issues statements to the press like (I quote from vivid memory), "We intend to show Adam and Eve naked as God made them . . . but with good taste." Yet there is a curiously pathetic underside to such fatuity. According to Herb Caen, when *The Kremlin Letter* was previewed in San Francisco, Huston advised friends to see it without staying for the accompanying picture, next to which he felt his suffered by comparison; the other picture was *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid.* That the man whom James Agee once saw as the brightest hope in the American film should now seem to feel slightly ashamed to have his new film, with its echoes of the world of his vintage thrillers, seen in the company of the (then) latest model in with-it ragbags is an irony I would have been happy to have done without.

THERE IS no irony in the film of *Myra Breckinridge;* no pathos; no anything. There might have been pathos of a sort in seeing John Huston assiduously making a fool of himself, if one didn't feel he were being so well paid for it. (There was more in seeing him doing it recklessly and free, acting his Master of the Hounds, Irish Country Squire role, in an NET profile several seasons ago.) There *is* pathos of a sort in seeing Mae West lured out of retirement in order to provide this self-demeaning caricature of her former glory; the brute fact is that, at seventy-eight, no matter how miraculously she is preserved, her single-entendre can only be a grotesquerie; at seventy-eight, it almost might as well be Sophie Tucker. Rex Reed is unimprovably typecast. Only Raquel Welch escapes from the debacle of the film relatively unscathed, displaying, even in the face of such adversity, the instincts of a talented comedienne.

There *was* irony in Gore Vidal's brilliant sick joke of a book, and elegance, too, impossible as it might be to infer either of these qualities from the film's barnbroad, anything-for-a-laugh vulgarity. The fact is that, even had there been some serious attempt at fidelity to the original, the book is probably unfilmable. This is not because of its sexual explicitness; the film has come closer to reproducing this, however witlessly, than, at the time filming was announced, I would have thought possible. Rather, what eludes the film, and would perhaps elude any film, is the comprehension of a world by a point of view, the creation of its world in a personal voice, which, in a real sense, *is* this novel. Like the Kelly family of limerick fame, the (non-) characters of the film are busily intertwined; there is a scene of anal rape with dildo, and even an on-screen urine specimen; and still the novel proves elusive. There is almost something instructive in seeing this film flexing its muscles and thrashing about with all the license that its X rating can give it, and still powerless to transcend, even by a hair's-breadth, the limitations of its medium.



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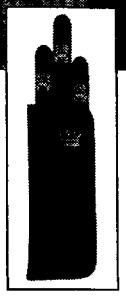

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Hemingway

ISLANDS IN THE STREAM. By ERNEST HEMINGWAY. *Scribners. 466 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by STEPHEN DONADIO

THE SECOND of Ernest Hemingway's books to be published posthumously, *Islands in the Stream* antedates the first from the point of view of composition by approximately ten years. *A Moveable Feast* (published in 1964) contains memoirs begun in Cuba in the fall of 1957 and ostensibly completed with final revisions in Ketchum, Idaho, in the fall of 1960, not long before the author's death. The present work, a long three-part novel which (according to the account given by Professor Carlos Baker of Princeton University in his recent, superficially painstaking biography)* grew out of Hemingway's conception of a big book about the sea—a conception which came to include *The Old Man and the Sea* as its concluding fourth section—was apparently begun shortly after the period of irritability and depression which followed the bad reviews attending publication of *Across the River and Into the Trees*: though it may contain elements composed several years earlier, the entire book seems to have been written and revised during a "huge working streak" between December 1950 and late summer 1951.

Although there are a number of confusing discrepancies between Professor Baker's account and the actual "Sea Novel" manuscripts described in the inventory published in 1969 by Philip Young and Charles W. Mann,† these dates seem relatively certain. But while *The Old Man and the Sea*, written rapidly in January-February 1951, was soon jettisoned from the larger work and eventually published on its own in its entirety (at first in an issue of *Life* magazine for September 1952), the three remaining sections of the "Sea Novel" were never to appear in Hemingway's lifetime, despite the fact that he seems to have considered them ready for publication by the end of August 1951. The reasons for the delay in publication are not certain: it is possible that Hemingway felt that the book required further revision; it is also possible that he regarded it as "life insurance" (as he used to say), that he decided it was something he had written "for the bank" in order to save money on his income tax and spread his income out more evenly over leaner years; and it is possible that he felt that he needed to keep this novel in reserve in case his talent ever failed him. As will be seen, there might have been other reasons, too, reasons suggested by his own peculiar feeling about the book.

In any case, the book has now been published, edited by Mary Hemingway and Charles Scribner, Jr., and in the very brief note accompanying the text Mrs. Hemingway explains that "Beyond the routine chores of correcting spelling and punctuation, we made some cuts in the manuscript, I feeling that Ernest would surely have made them himself. The book is all Ernest's. We have added nothing to it." One cannot help but wonder exactly what was cut and why, and whether (as the wording of the note suggests) the two editors were in some disagreement about the validity of the excisions. (It should also be pointed out, although Mrs. Hemingway does not do so, that the title of the published book is an alteration of "The Island and the Stream," which in the manuscripts appears to serve as the title of only one part of the novel, and that the titles of the individual sections of the published version—"Bimini," "Cuba," and "At Sea"—do not seem to be indicated in the manuscripts at all.)

THE BOOK'S three sections proceed chronologically; taken together they record (through flashback, recollection, and present-tense action) the life of Thomas Hudson, a successful American painter several times divorced, from his youthful, idyllic sojourn in the Paris of the 20's to the brink of death in Cuba during World War II. Anyone familiar with the details of Hemingway's own life will find many of them here, including the flat above the sawmill in Paris, the cat named "Mr. F. Puss" (and later another cat named "Boise"), the Floridita bar in Havana, the informal, improvised "Q-boat" patrols which Hemingway undertook in his own boat, the *Pilar*, in 1942-43, etc. The appearance of such details, some of which hardly seem transformed at all, serves to reinforce Philip Young's claim that Hemingway's fiction was always intensely autobiographical—a claim further reinforced by the Hemingway manuscripts, which show, for example, that in the original draft of *The Sun Also Rises* (titled "Fiesta") the character who later comes to be known as Jake Barnes is referred to as "Hem" or "Ernie," and Brett Ashley is called "Duff," after her real-life original, Lady Duff Twysden.

"Bimini," the opening section of *Islands in the Stream*, is largely concerned with a visit to Thomas Hudson by his three sons (one, Tom, by his first wife; two, David and Andrew, by his second) during their winter holidays. In addition to a powerful, if somewhat hallucinatory, fight scene which takes place before the boys' arrival, and other minor scenes (some of them funny) later, this section contains a long episode, similar in many

STEPHEN DONADIO *reviewed* Zelda *by Nancy Milford in our August issue.*

* *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story*, Scribners, 697 pp., $10.00.

† *The Hemingway Manuscripts*, Pennsylvania State University Press, 138 pp., $5.95.

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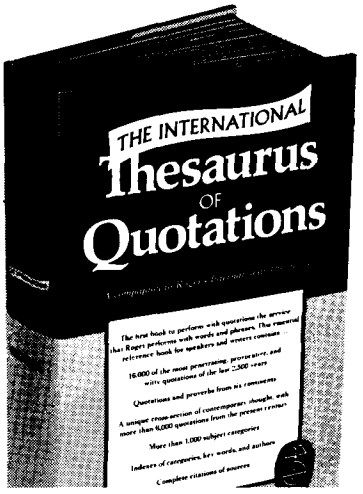

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ways to *The Old Man and the Sea*, in which David, the middle son, goes through a six-hour ordeal attempting to bring in an enormous broadbill swordfish as a test of manhood and endurance. After the boys have left, Hudson finds himself alone again, just how alone he learns as Part I closes, when he receives word that David and Andrew have been killed in an automobile crash with their mother near Biarritz (it is worth noting, in this connection, that early in 1947 Hemingway's sons Patrick and Gregory were involved in a similar accident with their mother, Pauline Pfeiffer Hemingway, although none of the three seems to have been seriously hurt). That the numbing effect of this news is to carry through the rest of the book is made apparent by Hudson's reaction when someone attempting to console him reminds him that he still has his eldest son: " 'For the time being,' Thomas Hudson said, and for the first time he looked straight down the long and perfect perspective of the blankness ahead." On his way to Europe to take care of things, Hudson "thought that on the ship he could come to terms with his sorrow, not knowing yet, that there are no terms to be made with sorrow. It can be cured by death. . . . But if it is cured by anything less than death, the chances are that it was not true sorrow."

In Part II ("Cuba"), Thomas Hudson has just learned that his eldest son, Tom, has been killed in the war. The logic of the book's progression has now become clear: first all his sons, then he himself, must die. This section of the novel divides itself into two main parts. In the first, Hudson, after a sleepless night, goes into Havana with the intention of spending the day drinking and the evening having "his ashes dragged." A long scene in the Floridita bar follows, during which Hudson consumes innumerable double frozen daiquiris (no sugar) and tells stories to Honest Lil, the respectable local prostitute, somewhat over the hill, whom he is planning to go home with. The scene is interrupted by the arrival of Hudson's first wife, a beautiful actress now in uniform; they leave together, go back to Hudson's *finca*, go to bed together briefly, share the shock of the death of their son, and part ways again as Hudson is suddenly called back to his work (which is unspecified but clearly very dangerous).

"At Sea," Part III of *Islands in the Stream*, is completely taken up with the pursuit of the crew of a sunken German submarine off the coast of Cuba by Hudson and a group of underground commandos posing as scientists. This section of the book is unquestionably the weakest and most tedious, but in retrospect this seems to be because the real function of the plot here is simply to deliver Thomas Hudson into death: the ultimately meaningless pursuit, with all its elaborate strategies and calculations, serves only to delay that inescapable conclusion. And the book ends abruptly when the played-out narrative falls slack, as Thomas Hudson, after sustaining a wound which "he knew . . . was internal," suddenly feels "sick into his bones and through his chest and his bowels and the ache went into his testicles." Realizing that he is about to die, he experiences the "onslaught of weakness" and, without a thought of struggle, yields to it.

IT WAS this last section which Hemingway had the most difficulty writing, but there is a quality of insomnia about the novel as a whole, an edge of desperation reminiscent of a man driving himself beyond exhaustion. The resulting combination of determination and distractedness probably accounts for the book's uneven momentum: the narrative often seems slightly out of control, as if it had begun growing with a life of its own, bulging out in strange and unexpected blossoms which are then cut back, only to reappear after a time like the heads of the Hydra. This powerful but bizarre emotional quality of the book is suggested by such passages as the following, taken from Part I. Here Hudson's eldest son is recalling the days in Paris when his father used to kill pigeons with a slingshot in the Jardin du Luxembourg and the young boy would hide them, still

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warm, under his coat until they had reached home:

"I remember the time one came alive," young Tom said. "And I held him quiet and didn't say anything about it all the way home because I wanted to keep him. He was a very big pigeon, almost purple color with a high neck and a wonderful head and white on his wings, and you let me keep him in the kitchen until we could get a cage for him. You tied him by one leg. But that night the big cat killed him and brought him in to my bed. The big cat was so proud and he carried him just as though he were a tiger carrying a native and he jumped up to the bed with him. . . . You and mother were gone to the café and the big cat and I were alone and I remember the windows were open and there was a big moon over the sawmill and it was winter and I could smell the sawdust. I remember seeing the big cat coming across the floor with his head high up so the pigeon barely dragged on the floor and then he made one jump and just sailed right up into the bed with him. I felt awfully that he had killed my pigeon but he was so proud and so happy and he was such a good friend of mine I felt proud and happy, too. I remember he played with the pigeon and then he would push his paws up and down on my chest and purr and then play with the pigeon again. Finally I remember he and I and the pigeon all went to sleep together. I had one hand on the pigeon and he had one paw on the pigeon and then in the night I woke up and he was eating him and purring loud like a tiger."

Asked by his youngest brother, "Were you scared, Tommy, when he was eating him?" the older boy replies, "No. The big cat was the best friend I had then. I mean the closest friend. I think he would have liked me to eat the pigeon too."

The association of tenderness with violence or horror represented here appears in other forms throughout the book. There is a similar scene involving Thomas Hudson and his own cat, "Boise," recalled in Part II. And early in the book when Hudson's friend Roger Davis, after some provocation, beats up an unnamed char-

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acter almost beyond recognition, in the process he also "ruins" him as a man by holding him up to steady him each time he is about to fall, in a "way that made him feel absolutely helpless": holding him "with his thumbs pushing in against the tendons at the base of the biceps," "rubbing the thumbs back and forth over the tendons between the biceps and the forearms." Here the act of cruelty and humiliation becomes virtually indistinguishable from an act of compassion, and the same emotional ambiguity is reflected in the dialogue: holding the arms of the beaten man in this way, " 'You're a strong son of a bitch,' he said to the man. 'Who the hell ever told you you could fight?' "

Similarly, after young David Hudson has completed his ordeal with the swordfish, he confesses that "In the worst parts, when I was the tiredest I couldn't tell which was him and which was me" and "Then I began to love him more than anything on earth." The sexual carry-over of this tendency to merge with the antagonist at moments of conflict (a tendency which seems related to a powerful self-destructive impulse) is clearly expressed in a dream which Thomas Hudson has in the last part of the book:

> While Thomas Hudson was asleep he dreamed that his son Tom was not dead and that the other boys were all right and that the war was over. He dreamed that Tom's mother was sleeping with him and she was sleeping on top of him as she liked to do sometimes. He felt all of this and the tangibility of her legs against his legs and her body against his and her breasts against his chest and her mouth was playing against his mouth. Her hair hung down and lay heavy and silky on his eyes and on his cheeks and he turned his lips away from her searching ones and took the hair in his mouth and held it. Then with one hand he moistened the .357 Magnum and slipped it easily and sound asleep where it should be. Then he lay under her weight with her silken hair over his face like a curtain and moved slowly and rhythmically.

Among the many striking things to be noted about this extraordinary passage are the suggestion of a reversal of sexual roles and the fact that the instrument of love is a deadly weapon. (It seems indicative of the novel's emotional economy, in this connection, that in Part III, after all of Hudson's children have been killed, the machine guns carried by the men should be referred to throughout as *los niños*.) Later in the dream the exchange of identities is made explicit as Hudson's wife tells him to take off the pistol and asks him, "Should I be you or you be me?" After he has agreed to try to be her, she asks again, "Will you give up everything?" And Hudson, replying yes, asks, "Will you swing your hair across my face and give me your mouth please and hold me so tight it kills me?" " 'Of course,' " she replies, " 'And you'll do it for me?' "

THE REAL interest of *Islands in the Stream* lies in the emotional life trapped but stirring restlessly beneath its surface, a life which it manages to convey through these passages of prose cut loose and floating free of the particular events of the plot: the events themselves are often (especially in Part III) presented without conviction, and in any case they serve as an inadequate vehicle for the burden of feeling they must bear. But it is precisely the distance between realistically-conceived events in the present tense and feelings suspended in a past whose presence can be reached only in dreams or dreamlike recollections that makes the obsessive drama of the novel so compelling, even when, from a narrow literary point of view, it is least successful. In this connection, near the end of the novel the author observes of the action that "Thomas Hudson had the feeling that this had happened before in a bad dream," that "this was another thing that had happened sometime in his life. Perhaps it had happened all his life. But now it was happening with such an intensification that he felt both in command and at the same time prisoner of it."

This ambiguous relation to the action corresponds closely to the rhythm and mood of the last section of the novel, and it may have

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something to do with the great difficulty which Hemingway seems to have had in completing that section. That he did have difficulty is suggested by the daily word count which he often marked at the end of the typescript pages. But that word count, although at times remarkably small, would not in itself be particularly significant; it is well known that Hemingway normally wrote very slowly—his output rarely exceeded an average of five or six hundred words a day—and it must be remembered that he had just gone through an extremely productive period during which he had produced one immediately publishable book at what was (for him) almost blinding speed. But another, more intriguing, bit of information recorded by Professor Baker suggests that the difficulty which Hemingway experienced at this time was not simply a result of fatigue or lack of inspiration. According to Professor Baker, after the completion of the final section of the book, in an unpublished letter to an old friend Hemingway "later said, somewhat overdramatically, that he had 'dreaded' to write it and had even hoped at one time that he would never have to set it down."

The appalling presumption involved in the judgment that Hemingway was expressing himself "somewhat overdramatically" about an experience which he himself had just gone through is consistent with Professor Baker's characteristic biographical stance, but once he has demonstrated that he has no trouble at all judging Hemingway's reaction he does go on to indicate that he is not altogether sure he understands it, and to summarize, evidently—but not quote directly—Hemingway's exact statement: "The reason for his dread was not entirely clear. Perhaps he meant only that it was so hard a task that he doubted his ability to bring it off. But there was a hint in what he said that the story was a true one—indeed, one might have inferred from his words that it had actually happened to him."

Feelings so powerful, no matter how apparently inappropriate, cannot be dismissed lightly, and it is difficult to keep from speculating that they might have had something to do with Hemingway's decision not to publish what was ostensibly a finished work. Hemingway was, after all, a rather superstitious man, and if this novel really struck him, in some strange way, as a rehearsal—or re-living—of his own death, then it seems understandable that he might have wanted to put the book away for awhile, if only by deciding not to publish it immediately. Two other bits of information are worth pondering in this regard. One: early in 1951, although he had apparently already finished the early sections of the book, instead of going on to the final section Hemingway paused in the story of Thomas Hudson and took up the narrative which was to become *The Old Man and the Sea*, a task which (in Professor Baker's words) he "wrote Harvey Breit that he had been afraid to tackle . . . for ten years, though in fact he had put it off for sixteen." Whatever else this may suggest, it clearly indicates that a task which Hemingway had put off for a very long while seemed more appealing to him at that time than the prospect of the one which lay immediately before him. Two: after the completion of this long sea novel, in the spring of 1952, Hemingway began work on a novel about Nick Adams and his kid sister fleeing the law in upper Michigan—a novel which he never finished, but worked on at various times at least until the summer of 1958, and which Professor Baker describes as "a curious throwback to the time of his boyhood both in style and substance."

THE PUBLICATION of *Islands in the Stream* will not diminish Hemingway's stature, nor will it add to it appreciably; but it should have the effect of reawakening serious critical interest in Hemingway by altering the dominant, rather schematic conception of the shape of his career and raising important new questions about his life and work and the relations between them. For a number of years many literary people have assumed, not always tacitly, that whatever his early achievements Hemingway

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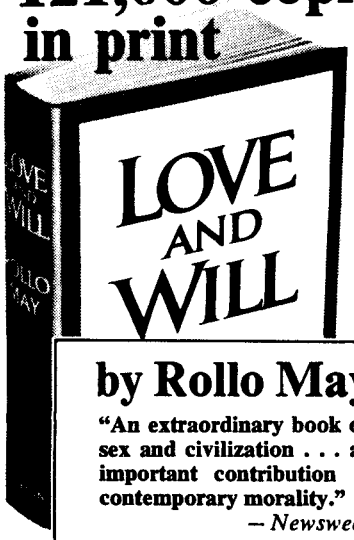

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eventually became a vaguely punch-drunk braggart lost in his own public image (if he had been able to lose himself that way, of course, there is no reason to suppose that he would not at least have been a happy man: he is still rumored to be Scribners' best-selling author). Ten years ago the news of his suicide left several generations shaken and forced some tentative, if inconclusive, reconsiderations; but the old refrains are still plainly audible in John Aldridge's 1965 judgment that "it now seems clear that Hemingway was in a state of progressive creative decline for at least the last two decades of his life," and in the comfortable assertion of a scholar at Ball State University in 1966 that "The giants that stalk Hemingway's world are experiences never measured and subdued by thought, never ordered within a framework of existence more comprehensive than that of a rather sensitive adolescent. . . . For all its blood and thunder, Hemingway's world is not quite man-sized."

HEMINGWAY'S immense popularity has also been a problem, especially in the academy, where such things as best-sellerdom and movie rights are often (or used to be, before the inversions of "Camp" and the institutionalized worship of popular culture) superciliously regarded—at least overtly—as the unmistakable visible emblems of uncleanness and aesthetic inferiority; but that is merely one of the elements to be discerned in Leslie Fiedler's astonishing pronouncement (if only from the point of view of simple human decency), made in 1964, that "With a single shot [Hemingway] redeemed his best work from his worst, his art from himself, his vision of truth from the lies of his adulators." Such statements as these and the simple-minded or downright repellent assumptions on which they are based have gone more or less unchallenged in recent years, but it is to be hoped that the publication of new Hemingway works, together with more detailed information about his manuscripts, will make a decisive challenge not only likely but inevitable in the near future.

In this regard, the appearance of *Islands in the Stream* is certain to raise questions about what unpublished Hemingway works still exist in manuscript, especially since there have been so many wild speculations and rumors regarding this matter (some of which will undoubtedly persist despite the published inventory). In the moving summary account of his labors published under the title "In the Vault with Hemingway" in the New York *Times Book Review* in 1968, Philip Young indicated that there were about 3,000 pages of unpublished manuscript, consisting—in addition to the present work—for the most part of a long, unfinished, mainly autobiographical "African Book" dating from 1955; a novel called "Garden of Eden," set mainly on the Riviera in the 20's (the provisional final chapter of which was written in 1958, when, according to Hemingway's note, he "thought something might happen before the book could be finished"); twenty chapters of an early (1927) novel called "Jimmy Breen"; and numerous early and late stories, the latter, according to Young, "set in World War II and lying somewhere between fiction and autobiography."

There is no way of knowing at this point how many of these manuscripts will eventually be published, but it should be noted that Scribners is planning to bring out, possibly in the spring of 1971, a collection tentatively titled *The Adventures of Nick Adams* (edited by Philip Young), which will presumably contain at least two unpublished Nick Adams stories: the half-novel mentioned earlier and a story called "Summer People" which Hemingway listed as unfinished in a 1926 notebook, and which Young takes "to be the first Nick story Hemingway wrote: the holograph shows him vacillating but finally deciding on his persona's name."

In time, the publication of such previously unknown works, by raising more questions than they seem at first to answer, will undoubtedly effect a serious revaluation of the significance of Hemingway's

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career. But such a revaluation will require a rereading of his works which has as its object something more than proving that he was an adolescent, woman-hating bully, or that his prose went downhill all the way, or that these books are "successful" and those "fail." It will also inevitably demand a careful study of the manuscripts, when these become more generally available, as well as the letters (which, although Hemingway left his widow specific instructions not to publish any of them, have not been destroyed). And while this ideal process is getting under way, one may permit oneself to hope that Philip Young, who after all his personal difficulties with Hemingway is still engaged in the labor of understanding, will decide to begin writing the unauthorized, definitive biography.

The Prophet Confronted

THE NEW REFORMATION. By PAUL GOODMAN. *Random House. 208 pp. $5.95.*

Reviewed by HERBERT N. SCHNEIDAU

ALTHOUGH he was a prophet of the youth movement, Paul Goodman's position now demands more sympathy than awe. He counted on the kids to make a revolution, and they made a reformation instead. Trying to make the best of it, he forecasts that we are "on the eve of a transformation of conscience" that will give us back mastery over an uncontrolled but overcontrolling technology and over a process of "socialization" that nullifies the creative anarchy of the individual. Not without cause, therefore, is the book subtitled *Notes of a Neolithic Conservative*: it was Senator Goldwater, after all, who made famous the slogan that social problems like integration must wait on a change of heart. Goodman remains by any conventional standard a radical, but he makes clear in this book that his idea of social improvement is to salvage as much as possible of what mankind has been building for the last few thousand years—up to and including the moon landing, which he underwrites, although noting that it was a product of the "adolescent mentality of John Kennedy."

Some, however, inferred from Goodman's earlier work that our culture was so alienating and de-

HERBERT N. SCHNEIDAU *is teaching English this year at the University of California at Santa Barbara.*

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humanizing that those young were right who wanted to junk it and start over. The new book's jacket-blurb tells us that "*Growing Up Absurd,* published thirteen years ago, still serves as the indispensable guide to the rebellion of American youth," and the implications of this assertion put Goodman in a very uncomfortable position. The overtones of nihilism and political manipulation in much recent "protest" appall him, the insolence and barbarism that have become cultic wound his gentle soul. Yet he cannot turn his back on the kids: like many even in the disgusted "silent majority" he is still trying poignantly to love all of them. Consequently, though the book contains and implies searching criticisms of the youth movement, they are immediately hedged with many sorrowful excuses and self-accusations. "In 1958 I called them my 'crazy young allies' and now I'm saying that, when the chips are down, they're just like their fathers. The change must partly be because I myself am old and tired . . . for they are better than their detractors . . . they *are* the ball game," and so on. Thus he takes a foursquare stance firmly, even programmatically, in ambivalence. After citing some determinedly mindless attack on our culture by one or another young negativist, he is as likely as not to add wistfully, "but he was right."

The ironies involved are not always apparent to him. In one remarkable passage he reveals that his Random House editor was so offended by what he took to be a put-down in one of Goodman's ambivalent remarks about the youth culture (in this case its music) that he couldn't even construe a simple sentence. For Goodman this shows mainly that the times are trying our tempers, and that TV has rotted our literacy. But surely the amazing point is that the intolerance to criticism of youth-cult and its idolaters extends no privileges to former prophets. That Paul Goodman, of all people, should be chastised for incomplete reverence toward youth and all its works! The irony would be delicious if it did not reinforce powerfully a point that Goodman makes elsewhere: "Their lack of a sense of history is bewildering."

A historyless man needs a new anthropology. One young enthusiast told Goodman that the Berkeley Victory of 1964 was "the first human event in forty thousand years." The New Man is "swamped with presentness. Since there is no background or structure, everything is equivalent and superficial. He can repair the TV but he thinks the picture is real (Marshall McLuhan doesn't help). He says my lecture blew his mind and I am flattered till he tells me that L. Ron Hubbard's metempsychosis in Hellenistic Sardinia blew his mind. I wonder if he has any mind to blow." The new anthropology may have to base itself not only on the Protestant Reformation but on 18th-century Enthusiasm (having already picked up terms like "Establishment" and "Dissent" from that general area).

THERE IS a slogan that the young are fond of using about their subculture: if you haven't tried it, don't knock it. Surely Goodman has earned a few knocks. Yet if his own editor—possibly the one who wrote the blurb?—bristles at the very suggestion of criticism, what will be the reaction of the young? Will they listen to Goodman's pleas for more anarchy and less Leninism? Will they take seriously his contention that the real need of culture now is for truly autonomous professionals and technologists? Probably not, for as Goodman himself argues, in this crisis of Faith there can no longer be belief in Works. He cites several of his own confrontations with this new Inner Light. In one, he invited "seasoned professionals" to explain to some students how professions were corrupted by the System, but the class was so busy denouncing these "sell-outs" they didn't even hear the social criticism. It turned out they didn't believe in professions or special knowledge of any sort:

> It was necessary only to be human, they insisted, and all else would follow. . . . To be required to learn something was a trap by which the young were put down and co-opted. . . . I had imagined that the worldwide student protest had to do with changing political and moral institutions, and I was sympathetic to this. But I now saw that we had to do with a religious crisis. Not only all institutions but all learning had been corrupted by the Whore of Babylon [*sic*], and there was no longer any salvation to be got from Works.

Insofar as such students represent a considerable number of today's youth—and were not putting him on—Goodman has made an important point. His vision of this suggests to him a Freudian explanation: "the return of the repressed." But he never puts this phrase into the specifically American cultural context that seems to call out for it. Is it not likely that the Puritan superego we thought we had shucked so long ago is returning to haunt us? In fact have we ever gotten rid of it? Take for example the relation of American moralism to the Puritan categorization of souls. Our children are taught the basic paradigm by their adventure serials, that the world is divided into good guys and bad guys. Hence they grow up expecting that political figures are either "honest" or "corrupt"—which is the rationale of the exposé—and our folk-sociology is notorious for dividing the population into decent people and criminals. Lately we have heard about the liberated vs. the repressed, or even more Calvinistically, the under- vs. the over-thirty. What is all this but the elect and the damned? The urge self-righteously to judge others runs strong in America, and Goodman himself is partly responsible for the channeling of this urge into facile judgments of nations and cultures by every unfledged rhetorician. Goodman tends to excuse the moralism of these judges, on the grounds that they've been subjected to alienation; however, they seem unsure whether they're "dehumanized" or in fact more human than the rest of us: when the latter, they're not noticeably different from other victims of sanctimoniousness. "Humaner-than-thou" is not much less repulsive than "holier-than-thou."

Of the Calvinist dualism underlying this itch to judge Goodman

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says nothing directly, but he has a haunting vision that someone will soon try to coerce apocalypse with some terrorist action (as Charles Manson is alleged to have done):

> Such an event would produce a smashing reaction. Good, say the crazies, that will polarize the situation—"if you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem" (a slogan of both Students for a Democratic Society and the government's VISTA volunteers!). Those who hanker for the reaction might connive at the event to produce it. But it comes to the same thing.

The solution/problem version of the elect/damned categories (almost ubiquitous, as Goodman indicates, throughout the youth movement) reveals a pathetic need for moral certitudes and identifications as well as an itch for judgment. In last year's Buffalo disturbances, one student was heard to wish for a National Guard occupation of the campus. Why? "So then we could tell the good guys from the bad guys." This is pitiable, but underlying it is the same Manichean nightmare that haunts so much Protestant sectarianism: that in some Armageddon the saints will meet the demons who will finally drop their human disguises. Pigs, who as everyone knows are not human, mostly wear uniforms, but you can't tell—their agents may be all around you. The killing of Alex Rackley bears the marks of an exorcism as well as those of a political act.

Goodman doesn't seem interested in Manicheans, but he does present a whole set of parallels between Protestant sectarianism and events of our day, in one paragraph ticking off Congregationalists, Adamites, Pentecostals, Iconoclasts ("those who spindle IBM cards and throw the dean downstairs"—shades of the Defenestration of Prague), Jansenists, Petrobrusians, Waldenses, Lollards, and Anabaptists. "These analogies are not fanciful. When authority is discredited, there is a pattern in the return of the repressed. A better scholar could make a longer list; but the reason I here spell it out is that, perhaps, some young person will suddenly remember

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that history was about something." This last hope is laudable but naive; the young are not famous for tolerating the idea that what they're doing has been done before. But one accepts Goodman's analogy, finally, because all this is so very American. George Santayana, who knew about survivals of Puritanism and American religiosity, could have predicted we'd come to this. Goodman's remark that "when the chips are down, they're just like their fathers" is relevant to even more than the Calvinist sources of the vigilante mentality on both sides. Looked at with slightly jaundiced eyes, the whole panhandling, hitchhiking, thrillseeking subculture appears as a consumer society. As symbols of his own exasperation Goodman uses images like that of a hippie denouncing technology through a bullhorn, standing on the seat of a motorcycle. (He connects this with other kinds of hypocrisy, notably the cheerful abuse of civil liberties and freedom of speech—for one side but not for the other, etc.) As some structuralists say, we are not so much speakers of our language as spoken by it, and by "language" they mean all the signifying modes of culture. Surely the young activists suggest the aphorism; they are so often the prisoners of their own impoverished rhetoric that the extrapolation to the larger cultural paradigms is irresistible.

GOODMAN's new book is noteworthy in spite of its ambivalence, its hesitancy, its reluctance to give offense. He continues to think creatively and concretely on real social and educational problems, providing, among other things, a Defense of Poesy that many English professors seem to have forgotten, though the book contains about the expectable percentage of dabbling and utopianism. But there are few books in the world like this, the vision of the prophet confronted with his event. If Goodman's gaze quails occasionally, whose does not in these days? Ultimately the problem with Goodman is neither honesty nor courage, any more than it is learning or sensitivity. His discomfort stems from an illusion whose power he cannot break: that the youth movement, for all its faults, can be our salvation. Is this not one more of the quaint American beliefs about and in children, a speeded-up version of the idea that if we can only find the perfect method of child-rearing we can build a perfect world? Claims for the salvational character of what looks, from another perspective, remarkably like a Children's Crusade stem from this popularized-Rousseauist faith, augmented by the nation's turn-around on Vietnam. But on the latter point it could be argued that people are more tired of the protest itself, the lack of victory, and the moral uncertainty than of the killing or the war aims. Our country can never be the same, true, but many nations, like England just before the Second World War, have attained to skepticism about war's glories and patriotism without being noticeably "saved." Finally, pulling out of Vietnam will not bring the Kingdom; it will not even change our foreign

The Antioch Review

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policy very much. So there is no soteriology here.

The young cannot save us. They cannot even save themselves. If the future were in the hands of the young, then God help it, but they will be old themselves before they see it and anyhow, for better or worse, it is subject to forces that were ancient when they and we were born. Some of these, as Goodman says, were loose in Rome in 1510; we will make no better use of these forces than before if we do not learn that they have a history, and Goodman has amply demonstrated how unlikely that is.

Jewish Theology

ARGUMENTS AND DOCTRINES: A READER OF JEWISH THINKING IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE HOLOCAUST. Selected with Introductory Essays by ARTHUR A. COHEN. *Harper & Row. 541 pp. $11.95.*

Reviewed by MICHAEL A. MEYER

JEWISH THOUGHT in the modern period has been less a continuation of traditional modes than a series of responses to historical events impinging on Jewish existence. From the 18th century down to a generation ago, Jewish philosophers and theologians focused their attention on harmonizing Judaism with the prevailing intellectual currents of a world judged essentially friendly to the Jew, or at least proceeding in the direction of greater toleration. Almost without exception, Jewish thinkers in Western Europe and America conceived the Jewish future as one of intimate and organic connection with the non-Jewish environment. The last thirty years, embracing the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel, have necessitated a massive shift in the perspective of Jewish thinking. There has been none like it since the Enlightenment first raised Jewish hopes for intellectual and political integration within Gentile society.

The process of coming to grips with the new realities of Jewish existence after World War II and 1948 has been a slow one. But there has been at least an increasing awareness of the problems posed: How is it possible to believe in a God of history who chose Israel in the wake of Auschwitz? Is the Jewish state in any sense the beginning of the messianic redemption? Does the new Israel have any theological significance at all? It is to Arthur Cohen's credit that he has brought together nearly thirty essays, most of which explore these and related questions which contemporary Jewish thinkers cannot hope to avoid. The majority of the essays appeared in COMMENTARY and *Judaism*; with one exception all were written since 1945. Cohen has provided a brief general introduction, an afterword, and glosses for each piece, sometimes explaining, sometimes elaborating, and sometimes taking issue with the respective writer.

One of Nazism's first effects upon European Jewry was the identity crisis brought upon a large number of individuals who had ceased to regard themselves as Jews. With the adoption of the Nuremberg Laws, they found themselves externally redefined as Jews against their will according to ineluctable racial criteria. Not surprisingly, Jean Paul Sartre, in his *Reflections on the Jewish Question*, came to regard all contemporary Jews as the hapless victims of an animosity which shaped their identity and inhibited their escape from a senseless particularity. It is the point of the volume's first essay, written by Harold Rosenberg, to expose Sartre's skewed characterization of the Jew as based on his favorite analogy of the concentration-camp prisoner whose identity is imposed by his captors.

The fact is that thanks to intensive efforts at Jewish adult education many hitherto indifferent or self-hating European Jews came to an affirmation of their Jewishness for the first time during the 1930's. But others did not. Perhaps the

MICHAEL A. MEYER, *a new contributor, is associate professor of Jewish history at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati. Mr. Meyer is spending the current year in Israel teaching at Haifa University College.*

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extreme example is the brilliant and sensitive Simone Weil. In the crucible of the Holocaust, Weil, for whom pain and torment were exquisite manifestations of God's love, chose not to identify with the unchosen sufferings of Israel. Instead, she committed the absurdity (not to say, blasphemy) of charging Hitler with reviving the tribal God of Israel, "terrestrial, cruel, and exclusive." Cohen includes two essays on Weil. The first, elegantly written by Leslie Fiedler, argues, unconvincingly I think, that, despite her Jewish self-hatred, Simone Weil nonetheless belongs in the Jewish prophetic tradition. The late Hans Meyerhoff's piece is more persuasive in its contention that Weil's transformation of the Jewish God into an incarnation of Satan was an expression of her utter despair with earthly human existence and of her desperate outreach beyond the flawed world of men to arrive at a supernatural salvation.

THE LARGEST SECTION of the volume groups together a dozen essays under the title: "The Renewal of Theology." The most relevant of these pieces in one way or another all seek to provide direction for contemporary Jewish thought. The first, by Erich Unger, advocates a renewal of the medieval Jewish philosophical tradition which had the virtue of avoiding the modern error of divorcing religion from secular thought. Arthur Cohen, in an essay of his own, is concerned with the allied problem of communication between professional philosophers and Jewish thinkers. He argues that the biblical theologian, the existentialist, and the logical analyst all share a rejection of 19th-century philosophical systems; all three are post-rationalist. Positively, they are joined by a mutual respect for language and for the concrete data of history. Yet Cohen is fair enough to let follow immediately an essay by Steven Schwarzschild which seeks to correct the existentialist religious stance by recasting Jewish rationalism along the neo-Kantian lines of Hermann Cohen. Unless theologizing from individual experience in the manner of Buber and Rosenzweig is allowed to lead into clear definitions and concepts, Schwarzschild argues, such thinking will never be able to bridge the gulf separating the experiences of religious and secular men.

An even more basic issue is raised by Monford Harris when he calls into question the fundamental validity of the Jewish theological enterprise as such. It is well known that, especially among traditional Jews, the call for creating a Jewish theology in the 1950's received a very cool reception. It was widely felt that theology was a Christian, not a Jewish preoccupation. Harris argues that, historically, Jews have paid little attention to general theological issues such as, for example, the nature of man. That Jews today need to theologize can be explained only by their estrangement from the traditional forms of Jewish existence defined by the Halakhah. Harris concludes that the concern with Jewish theology is "a product of sickness," not a welcome development. At best it should be an "interim theology" to tide us over until we can rediscover the norms of traditional Jewish life.

The positions of Unger and Harris stand in clear contradiction to that of Emil Fackenheim, one of the most capable Jewish theologians of the postwar period. For Fackenheim, here represented by two essays, the Jew's relation to God demands continual reexamination by the committed Jewish theologian, not the critical, detached philosopher. Writing in the 1950's, Fackenheim takes a decidedly existentialist stance, refusing to place religion within the arena of reason. His interpretation of Jewish history is theological: Jewish survival can only be explained by reference to a living God; Jewish existence even today is determined by divine election. Fackenheim is one of the most eloquent, if apodictic, defenders of supernaturalism in the liberal Jewish community; he upholds and emphasizes the concept of revelation even while he rejects the specifics of Halakhah.

As suggestive as some of the essays in this theological section unquestionably are, one must fault the editor for his criteria of selection. Cohen has purposely eliminated certain writers on external and insufficient grounds. Although he has included positions differing from his own, he has intentionally shut out naturalist writers, Jewish death-of-God theologians (despite their obvious relevance), and (with one exception) any individual, however important his work, connected with a theological seminary. Such blatant prejudices serve to narrow the purview of the volume and severely limit its value. In their place Cohen has chosen to include a number of historical and general philosophical articles which are only most distantly related to his theme. In fact, through much of the volume one wonders whether the post-Holocaust motif of the title has not been totally abandoned. Essays by Gershom Scholem, Baruch Kurzweil, and Irving Kristol, to name only three out of more than a dozen, present "arguments and doctrines" but they simply do not relate directly to Jewish existence after the Holocaust. A number of them could easily have been written in the 1920's. Judging by this volume alone, one would have to conclude that the Holocaust has been much less crucial for Jewish thought than is in fact the case. On the other hand, the most relevant essay, by Emil Fackenheim, "Jewish Faith and the Holocaust,"* was omitted.

Cohen was right, however, to cluster a number of essays around the second major event of this generation's Jewish history: the establishment of the State of Israel. To one side stands Ben Halpern, who as a committed secularist rejects the entire Jewish theological revival and the attempt to limit Jewish life to the synagogue. For him, the Jewish future lies only with the State of Israel; America will at best allow Judaism to survive within the confining bounds of a religious denomination. It will have no room for Jewish secularism. Yet Halpern's Zionist negation of Diaspora fails to generate the obvious step of his own *aliyah*. To the other side stands Ernst Simon, living in Israel, but serious-

*COMMENTARY, August 1968.

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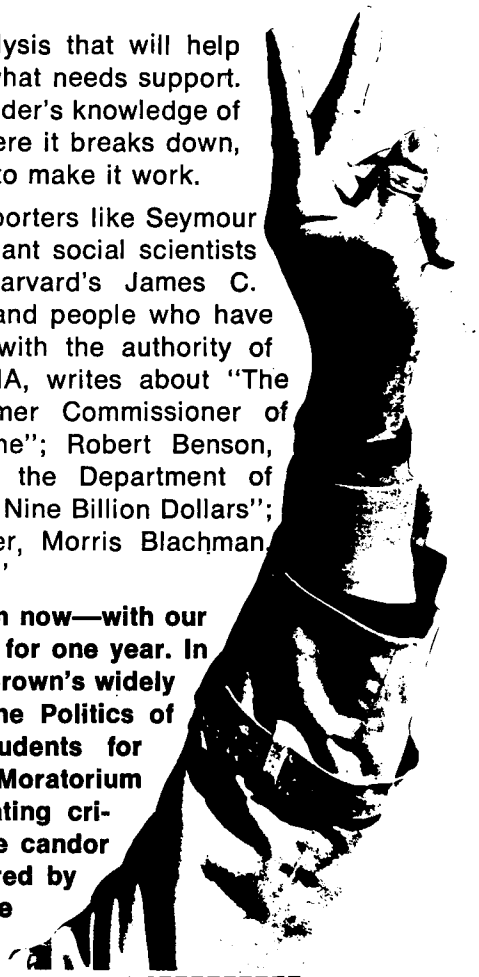

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ly doubtful about whether Israelis are still Jews. Given again, after two millennia, the opportunity of applying Judaism to the governance of an independent society, Israelis have been unable to solve satisfactorily the question of religion's role in the new state. Despairing of overcoming the hiatus between the religious and the non-religious, some Israelis have sought unity in attributing messianic purpose to the state as such. Those who have favored the integration of religion into political life have championed a clerical regime which imposes a minimal public religiosity willy-nilly upon the entire population. What is lacking in Israel, Simon argues, is a renewal of the spirit of prophetic criticism, not the immediate restoration of theocracy. For Aharon Lichtenstein, however, neither Halpern's secular bonds of peoplehood nor Simon's application of the prophetic conscience bestow sufficiently Jewish character upon Israel. He stands in a long tradition of religious Zionists for whom religion must play a determining role in the public life of a Jewish state. Though he rejects coercion as a "no longer feasible and justifiable *modus operandi*," he suggests that it is incumbent on Israel to educate its people to Jewish belief and observance, and in this process legislation necessarily plays a role. Between the alternatives of a wholly free society and a truly committed one, Lichtenstein (freely) chooses the latter.

Finally, we have Cohen's own "fideist" interpretation of Jewish existence, easily culled from his various glosses, especially the confession with which he prefaces the last selection. As a Diaspora Jew who does not feel regenerated by the land and for whom the creation of the State of Israel does not mitigate the Holocaust, the "extremity of history" requires him either to affirm God as redeemer or to deny Him completely. Cohen has chosen to believe that God's silence in the Holocaust, though humanly unfathomable, was not gratuitous. It will find its explanation in an eschaton "no less magnificent than the brutalities that anticipate its achievement." His supernaturally directed messianism is one answer to the immense theological questions cast up by the Holocaust. Regrettably, he has not given certain other, no less important, responses an equal hearing.

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Ethnic Joke

BECH: A BOOK. BY JOHN UPDIKE. *Knopf. 206 pp. $5.95.*

Reviewed by CYNTHIA OZICK

WHEN SOME time ago in these pages Alfred Chester flicked Updike off as a magician of surfaces, I wrote in my head the imaginary counter-review: Updike as Late Church Father. For years I sniffed after an opportu-

CYNTHIA OZICK's *novella, "Envy; or Yiddish in America," which appeared in our November 1969 issue, has been reprinted in* The Best American Short Stories 1970 *(Houghton Mifflin).*

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nity to think in print about the sacral Updike, and now that the chance is palpably here, it turns out to be not *Pigeon Feathers*, or *Rabbit, Run*, or *The Centaur*, or *Of the Farm*, not even *Couples*: those fictions of salvationism and eucharistic radiance. Instead, *oif tsulokhes* (the phrase of regret Bech's Williamsburg uncles would use and toward which Bech is amnesiac), here is Henry Bech, Jew, rising, like Shylock and Bloom, out of a Christian brain.

Updike, whose small-town stories in particular have suggested him as our most "American" writer, is considerably less American, it seems to me, than, say, George P. Elliott or R. V. Cassill, secularists in a post-Christian neuterland. It is not especially American to be possessed by theology, and Updike is above all the Origen of the novel. The epigraph for *The Poorhouse Fair* is from Luke, *Couples* is emblazoned with Tillich, *Rabbit, Run* quotes Pascal concerning "the motions of Grace." In *Couples*, as in St. Theresa, love's arrows and Christ's thorns fuse: "he thinks we've made a church of each other," someone says of one of the couples at the start, and in the last chapter fellatio becomes the Sacrament of the Eucharist: ". . . when the mouth condescends, mind and body marry. To eat another is sacred." Further rich proofs and allusions will contribute nothing: it is already well-known that John Updike is a crypto-Christian, a reverse Marrano celebrating the Body of Jesus while hidden inside a bathing suit. (*Vide* "Lifeguard," *Pigeon Feathers*.) Even Bech, a character, as they say, "preprocessed"—even Bech, who doesn't know much, knows *that*. In a letter which constitutes the Foreword to *Bech: A Book*, Bech tells Updike: "Withal, something Waspish, theological, scared, and insulatingly ironical . . . derives, my wild surmise is, from you." The original Marranos, in Spain, were probably the first group in history to attempt large-scale passing. As everyone knows (except possibly Bech), they ended at the stake. So much for Jews posing. What, then, of Christian posing as Jew? What would he have to take on, much less shuck off?

In the case of Updike's habitation of Bech, nothing. For Bech-as-Jew has no existence, is not *there*, because he has not been imagined. Bech-as-Jew is a switch on a library computer. What passes for Bech-as-Jew is an Appropriate Reference Machine, cranked on whenever Updike reminds himself that he is obligated to produce a sociological symptom: *crank, gnash*, and out flies an inverted sentence. Not from Bech's impeccably acculturated lips, of course, but out of the vulgar mouth ("Mother, don't be vulgar," Bech says in boyhood) of a tough Jewish mother lifted, still in her original wrap, straight out of *A Mother's Kisses*. The Foreword—which, like all Forewords, is afterthought and alibi—tries to account for this failure of invention by a theory of the comic: it is, you see, all a parody: ironically humorous novelist Bech addresses ironically humorous novelist Up-

An Appeal to American Jews from Pablo Casals

Dear Friend:

DO YOU KNOW that *16,000 Spanish refugees died in Nazi concentration camps*, along with their Jewish brothers, having chosen to fight Hitler? (8,000 died in Mauthausen alone!) They were victimized by the Nazis, forced into slave-labor battalions or deported to Dachau, Buchenwald, Bergen-Belsen . . .

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—Pablo Casals

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dike and coolly kids him about putting Bech together out of Mailer, Bellow, Singer, Malamud, Fuchs, Salinger, the two Roths. The Appropriate Reference Machine is thereby acknowledged as the very center of the joke; the laugh is at the expense of the citation. In search of a Jewish sociology, Updike has very properly gone to the, as Bech would say, *soi-disant* Jewish novel. And found:

Category: *Vocabulary*
1. Adjective: *zoftig*
2. Nouns
   a. *shikse*
   b. *putz*
3. Ejaculation: *ai*

Category: *Family*
1. Beloved uncles in Williamsburg
   a. backrooms
   b. potatoes boiling, "swaddled body heat"
2. Father (mentioned twice in passing)
   a. uxorious, a laugher
   b. no occupation given
3. Mother
   a. buys Bech English children's books at the Fifth Avenue Scribners
   b. takes young Bech to awards meeting of facsimile of Academy of Arts and Letters

Category: *Historical References*
1. "the peasant Jews of stagnant Slavic Europe"
2. Russian "quality of life" "reminiscent of his neglected Jewish past"
3. Hanukkah

Category: *Nose*
Bech's: Jewish big
(Forgive this. An in-joke. Updike's, *goyish* big, earns him the right.)

Category: *Hair*
Bech's: Jewish dark curly
(Cf. reviewer's)

Category: *Sex*
1. Sleeps willingly with Gentile women; like Mailer (though a bachelor) tries out whole spectrum of possible *shikse* types
2. But invited to sleep with *zoftig* Ruth Eisenbraun, is less willing; unclear if he does or doesn't

All right. No quarrel with most of these attributes. If the only Yiddish Bech knows is *shikse*, *putz*, and *zoftig*, he is about even with most indifferent disaffected de-Judaized Jewish novelists of his generation. And I suppose there are Jewish novelists who, despite the variety in the gene pool, have *both* big noses *and* kinky hair: one (affectionate?) stereotype doesn't make an anti-Dreyfusard. And if, on a State Department-sponsored visit, Bech associates the more comfortable tones of Russia—"impoverished yet ceremonial, shabby yet ornate, sentimental, embattled, and avuncular"—with his "neglected Jewish past," his is, like that of other indifferent disaffected de-Judaized Jewish novelists, a case not so much of neglect as of autolobotomy. Emancipated Jewish writers like Bech (I know one myself) *have* gone through Russia without once suspecting the landscape of old pogroms, without once smelling out another Jew. But because Bech has no Jewish memory, he emerges with less than a fourth-grade grasp of where he is. His phrase "peasant Jews" among the Slavs is an imbecilic contradiction—peasants work the land, Jews were kept from working it; but again Bech, a man who is witty in French, who in youth gave himself over to Eliot, Valéry, Joyce, who has invented a comic theory of the intelligence of groups, who thinks of himself as an Aristotelian rather than a Platonist—this same Bech is a historical cretin. If there had been "peasant Jews" there might have been no Zionism, no State of Israel, no worrisome Russians in the Middle East . . . ah Bech! In your uncles' backrooms in Williamsburg you learned zero: despite your Jewish nose and hair, you are—as Jew—an imbecile to the core. Pardon: I see, thanks to the power of Yuletide, you've heard of Hanukkah.

So much for the American Jewish novelist as sociological source. As a subject for social parody, it is fairly on a par with a comic novel about how slavery cretinized the black man. All those illiterate darkies! Bech as cretin is even funnier: they didn't bring him in

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chains, he did it to himself under the illusion he was getting civilized.

Nevertheless a few strokes seem not to be derivative and may be Updike's alone: one, the whimsical notion that a woman who speaks sentences like "Mister Touch-Me-Not, so ashamed of his mother he wants all his blue-eyed *shikses* to think he came out from under a rock" would venture past Gimbels to any Fifth Avenue store, much less to Scribners for English (*English!*) children's books. Having adequately researched P.S. 87, Updike might have inquired at the neighborhood branch library for Bech's sweaty-fingered, much-stamped ancient card ("Do Not Turn Down the Leaves"). Updike's second wholly original misapprehension is a masterpiece of the inane imagination. Comedy springs from the ludicrous; but the ludicrous is stuck in the muck of reality, resolutely hostile to what is impossible. That this same woman would by some means, some "pull," gain entry to a ceremony in a hall of WASP Depression *Hochkultur* is less mad than the supposition that she would ever have gotten wind of such doings. What rotogravure section carried them? Bech's mother's culture-drive stops at the public-library door; Bech goes in without her, and if he ends up reading Hawthorne in Bulgaria, the credit belongs to P.S. 87. Bech's grandfather's mind came equally unfurnished: what produces a Bech is a grandfather just like him, with no conscious freight of history, no scholarliness, and the sort of ignorant piety of rote that just sustains against poverty. Remove the poverty, slip in P.S. 87, and you have Bech. What Updike leaves out (and what Roth puts in) is the contempt of the new Bech for the old Bechs: the contempt of just appreciation. Updike writes, "[A]ll the furniture they had brought with them from Europe, the footstools and phylacteries, the copies of Tolstoy and Heine, the ambitiousness and defensiveness and love, belonged to the stuffy back room." (For love's duration in close family quarters, see Roth, *supra.*) Footstools in steerage? From out of the cemeteries on Staten Island ten thousand guffaws fly up. The beds left in Minsk still harbored the next wave to come. The phylacteries they threw away at the first sight of a paycheck for pants-pressing. And those who read Tolstoy or Heine alighted not in New York but in Berlin. Or stayed behind to make the Revolution. A Jew who came to New York with some *Gemara* in his brain was absolved from spawning Bech. Bech is a stupid intellectual. I know him well.

I am not asking Updike to be critical of Bech—it is not his responsibility: it is mine and Bech's. Besides, Updike loves Bech too much, especially where (and this is the greater part of the book) he is thoroughly de-Beched. Updike can be as funny as Dickens and as celestial as bits of *Anna Karenina*, and in this book he is, now and then, in glimpses, both. This happens when he is forgetting to remember about Bech-as-Jew; luck-

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ily, the crunch of the Appropriate Reference Machine is sometimes silenced. Updike loves Bech best when Bech is most openly, most shrewdly, most strategically, most lyrically Updike. Bech's failure—he is a celebrated writer suffering from Block—is rumor and theory, but the exact flavor of Bech's success is the stuff of Updike's virtu. Who else but Updike could take fame so for granted as to endow it with exhaustion? The exhaustion is examined with Updike's accustomed theological finesse: Bech's Block is to be taken somewhat like the modern definition of the Christian hell—no fire and brimstone in a fixed nether location; instead a sense of irreparable loss, a feeling of eternal separation from God, a stony absence of Grace. In the presence of his Block Bech becomes christologized. In the wilderness of his London hotel lobby he is even subjected to satanic wiles: the devil is a young journalist named Tuttle into whose notebook Bech spills his spiritual seed:

> . . . Bech talked of fiction as an equivalent of reality, and described how the point of it, the justification, seemed to lie in those moments when a set of successive images locked and then one more image arrived and, as it were, superlocked, creating a tightness perhaps equivalent to the terribly tight knit of reality, e.g., the lightning ladder of chemical changes in the body cell that translates fear into action or, say, the implosion of mathematics consuming the heart of a star.

Imagine the Body of Christ describing its transubstantiation from bread. What could the devil do but flee that holiness? But then, coming ever closer, there approaches the ghostly clank of the A.R. Machine, and the eucharistic Bech folds flat and begins to flap like the leaf of an ethnic survey-analysis study:

> He said, then, that he was sustained, in so far as he was sustained, by the memory of laughter, the specifically Jewish, embattled, religious, sufficiently desperate, not quite belly laughter of his father and his father's brothers, his beloved Brooklyn uncles; that the American Jews had kept the secret of this laughter a generation longer than the Gentiles, hence their present domination of the literary world; that unless the Negroes learned to write there was nowhere else it could come from; and that in the world today only the Russians still had it, the Peruvians possibly, and Mao Tse-tung but not any of the rest of the Chinese. In his, Bech's, considered opinion.

Here Updike, annoyed at the Machine's perpetual intrusions, allows it to grind itself into giggling berserkdom. The Machine is amusing itself; it is providing its own ethnic jokes. (The inopportune demands of Bech's Jewishness on his author should serve as sufficient warning to other novelists begging to be absorbed uninterruptedly by epiphanies: beware of any character requiring more sociology than imagination.) Bech, confronted at last by the journalist's printed report of their encounter, guesses the devil's spiritual triumph over matter: "He [Bech] had become a character by Henry Bech." Which is to say a folk-character out of Jewish vaudeville, not quite Groucho Marx, not yet Gimpel the Fool. Nevertheless unsaved. But while none of Updike's people has ever attained salvation, salvation is the grail they moon over. Bech's grail is cut in half, like his name,

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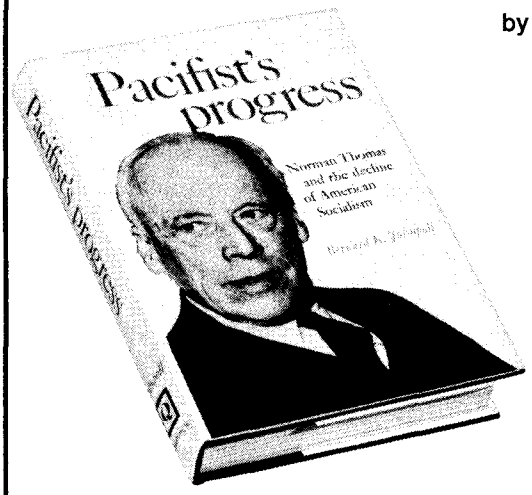

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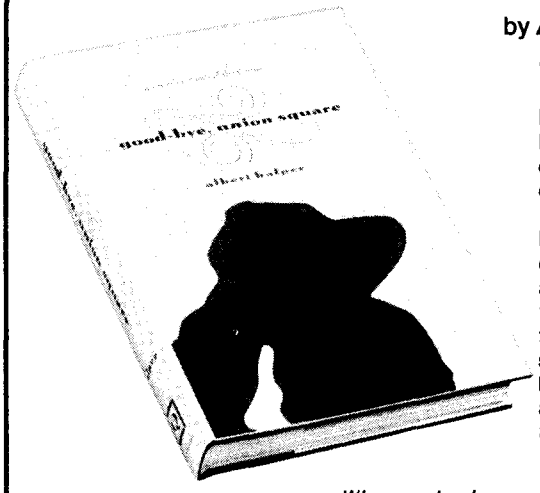

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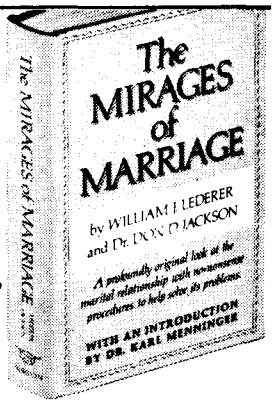

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which is half a *kiddush*-cup: *becher*. Over the broken brim the Jew in Bech spills out; Updike, an uncircumcised Bashevis Singer (as Mark Twain was the Gentile Sholem Aleichem), is heard in the wings, laughing imp-laughter.

The center of *Bech: A Book* is a sustained sniff of this Christian hell: it is so to speak an inverted epiphany, a negative ecstasy. Bech lectures at a Southern girls' college and experiences a Panic: "He felt dizzy, stunned. The essence of matter, he saw, is dread. Death hung behind everything. . . ." He sees "the shifting sands of absurdity, nullity, death. His death gnawed inside him like a foul parasite. . . ." "All things have the same existence, share the same atoms, reshuffled: grass into manure, flesh into worms." ". . . the grandeur of the theater in which Nature stages its imbecile cycle struck him afresh and enlarged the sore accretion of fear he carried inside of him as unlodgeably as an elastic young wife carries within her womb her first fruit." The abyss swells and contracts, until finally it shrinks from Immense Void to empty *becher* and again becomes recognizable merely as Bech's Block: "He tried to analyze himself. He reasoned that since the id cannot entertain the concept of death, which by being not-being is nothing to be afraid of, his fear must be of something narrower, more pointed and printed. He was afraid his critics were right. That his works were indeed flimsy, unfelt, flashy, and centrifugal. That the proper penance for his artistic sins was silence and reduction. . . ." It is typical of Updike that he even theologizes writing problems, though here he parodies his standard eschatology with an overlay of Freudian theodicy. The fact is Updike theologizes everything (in *Rabbit, Run* he theologized an ex-high-school basketball player); this is his saving power, this is precisely what saves him from being flashy and centrifugal. The stunning choice Updike has made —to be not simply an American but a Christian writer—distinguishes him: in this he is like a Jew (though not like Bech). America as neuter is not enough.

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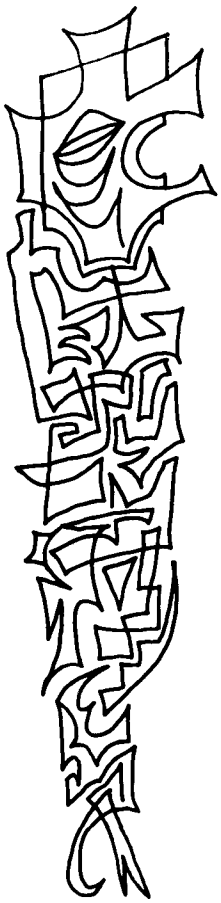
But he does not theologize the Jew in Bech. In seven chapters (really separate stories) he takes the mostly de-Beched Bech everywhere: from Russia to Rumania and Bulgaria, through scenes sweated with wistful wit and ironic love; from a worshipful pot-smoking ex-student through a shift of mistresses; from Virginia to stinging London to a sophomoric "Heaven" where the "Medal for Modern Fiction was being awarded to Kingsgrant Forbes" while "the sardonic hubbub waxed louder." (This last section, by the way, need not be compared for satiric thrust with Jonathan Swift: I suspect because both the Jewish Appropriate Reference Machine *and* the Literary Politics A.R. Machine, in tandem, were working away like *Mad.*) Wherever Updike is at home in his own mind, the book runs true, with lyric ease: the jokes work, small calculations pay off, anti-climaxes are shot through with a kind of brainy radiance. Without Bech *Bech* might have been small but sharp, a picaresque travel-diary wryly inventing its own compunctions. But wherever the Jew obtrudes, there is clatter, clutter, a silliness less comic than foolish. Bech makes empty data. It is not that Updike has fallen into any large-scale gaucherie or perilous failures-of-tone. It is not that Updike's American Jew is false. It is that he is not false enough.

By which I mean made up, imagined, mythically brought up into truthfulness.

IN THE CASE of Bech—and *only* in the case of Bech—Updike does not find it worthwhile to be theological. In no other novel does he resist the itch of theology; everywhere he invests ordinary Gentile characters with mythic Christian or proto-Christian roles, adding to local American anthropology a kind of sacral sense. And when the sacral is missing sulphur drifts up from the Void. Updike is our chief Dante: America is his heaven and hell. He has no such sense of Bech. It is as if he cannot *imagine* what a sacral Jew might be. You might want to say he is not altogether to blame, after all: what would any accurate sociological eye see on the American landscape but Bech? Nevertheless Bech is deviation, perhaps transient deviation, from the historical Jew. Being historical cretin, Bech does not know this about himself: unable to inherit his past, he has no future to confer. He is very plausibly without progeny: though his writing Block is an Updikean Christian salvational crisis, his Jewish Block consists of being no longer able to make history. As Jew he is all sociology, which is to say all manners (acquired exilic manners); as Jew he is pathetically truncated, like his name. So Updike finds Bech and so he leaves him. He comes and goes as anthropologist, transmuting nothing. It is very queer—it is something to wonder at—that Updike, who is always so inquisitive about how divinity works through Gentiles, has no curiosity at all about how it might express itself, whether vestigially or even by its absence or even through its negation, in a Jew.

Being a Jew (like being a Christian) is something more than *what is.* Being a Jew is something more than being an alienated marginal sensibility with kinky hair. Simply: to be a Jew is to be covenanted; or, if not committed so far, to be at least aware of the possibility of becoming covenant-



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ed; or, at the very minimum, to be aware of the Covenant itself. It is no trick, it is nothing at all, to do a genial novel about an uncovenanted barely nostalgic secular/neuter Bech: Bech himself, in all his multiple avatars, writes novels about Bech every day. It is beside the point for Updike and Bech together to proclaim Bech's sociological thereness. Of course Bech is, in that sense, there. But what is there is nothing. In a work of imagination Bech-as-he-is is critically unjustifiable. *It is not Bech-as-he-is that* interests us (if you want only that, look around you), but Bech-as-he-might-become. If to be a Jew is to become covenanted, then to write of Jews without taking this into account is to miss the deepest point of all. Obviously this is not only Updike's flaw, but essentially the flaw of the Jewish writers he is sporting with. It is no use objecting that Updike and others do not *aim* for the deepest point: concerning Jews, the deepest point is always most implicated when it is most omitted.

Descending, for the sake of the Jew alone, from the level of theological mythmaking to the level of social data, is Updike patronizing his Jew? One thinks, by contrast, of a Jew writing about a Gentile: I mean *Henderson the Rain King*. Meditating on the quintessential *goy*, Bellow makes up a holy culture to demonstrate him. The demonstration is not through *what is*, but through opposites: the *goy* is most revealed as not-Jew. It seems to me that a Christian writing of a Jew would profit from a similar route in showing the quintessential Jew as not-Gentile. Whereas Bech has no inner nature of his own, and only passes. Or I think of a short story, not altogether seamless but divinely driven, by George P. Elliott, in his collection *An Hour of Last Things*: a Jewish woman fevered by the beauty of a cathedral is made to waver between revulsion for Christian history and the lustful leap into the idolatry of Art. Here a secularized post-Christian WASP writer explores the most metaphorical depths of Commandment.

Two questions, then, remain to puzzle. Why, for Bech, does Updike withhold his imagination from the creation of Bech *as Jew?* And second: what motive, what need, what organic novelistic gains, emerge from the turn to Bech? As some say Mailer taunted Updike into the sexual adventurism of *Couples*, so now, it is declared, a similar competitiveness with Jewish "domination of the literary world" (Bech's self-sneering Gaullist phrase) compels him to a Jewish character. I reject the competitive motive: it seems plain that Updike experiments for himself, not for other writers, and pits himself against values, not persons. But while *Couples* turned out to be a Christian novel, *Bech* is a neuter. It may be that Updike's experiment this time lies precisely in this: to attempt a novel about no-values, about a neuter man. To find the archetypical neuter man, man separated from culture, Updike as theologian reverts to Origen and Ambrose, to centuries of Christian doctrine, and in such ancient terms defines his Jew. If the only kind of Jew Updike can see, among all these cities and hearts, is Bech, that is not solely because Bech is in the majority, or most typical; it is because for him Bech—the Jew as neuter man; the Jew as a theological negative—is most real.

BUT SEEN FROM the perspective of the Jewish vision (and what other perspective shall we apply to a Jew?), Bech has no reality at all: he is a false Jew, a poured-out *becher*, one who has departed from Jewish reality. For Updike to falsify the false—i.e., to lend the Jew in America the Grace of his imagination—would have been to get beyond data to something like historical truth. And he might have written a novel instead of a silliness. But that, I suppose, would have required him to do what Vatican II fought against doing: forgive the Jew for having been real to himself all those centuries, and even now. And for that he would have had to renounce the darker part of the Christian imagination and confound his own theology.

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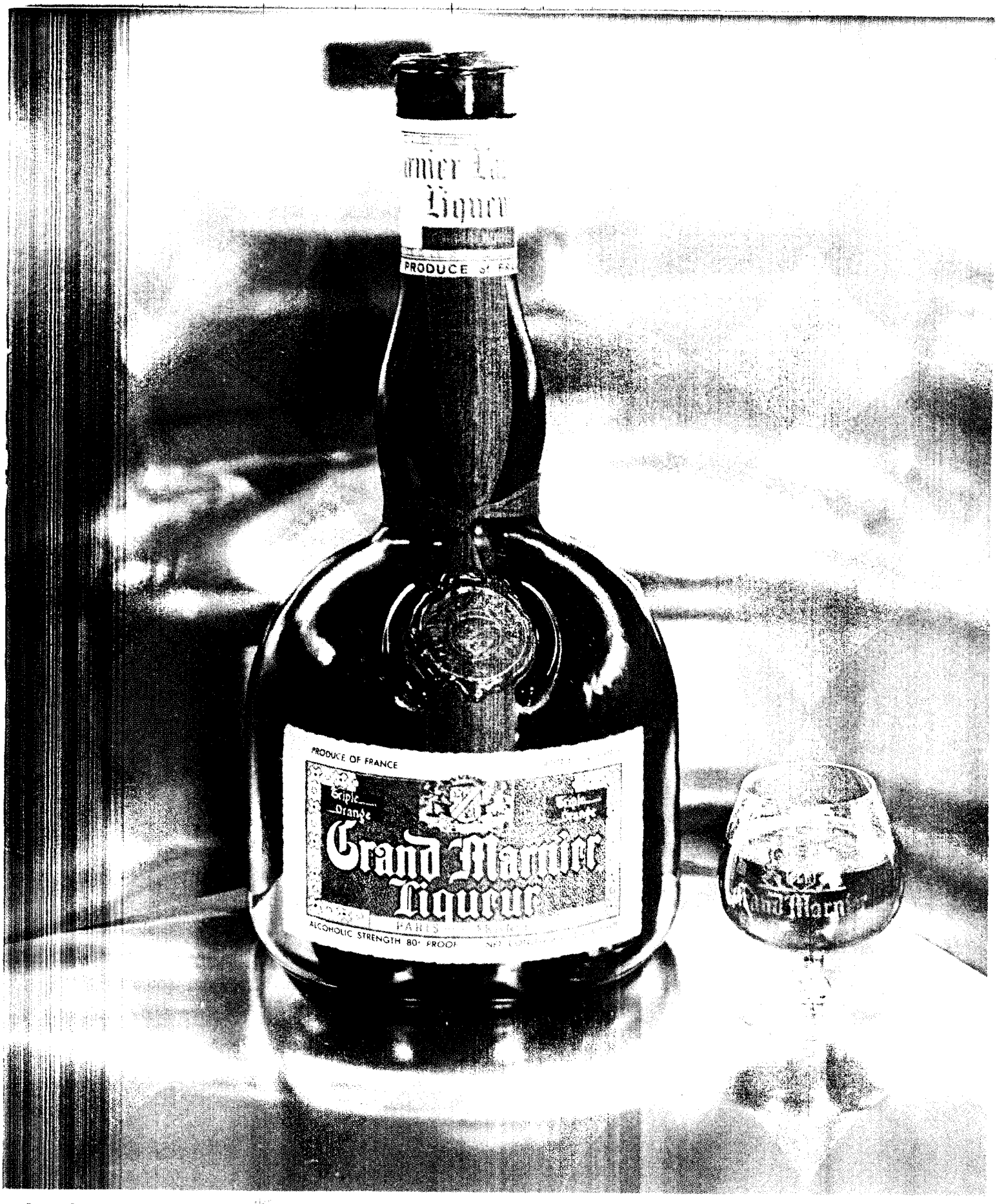

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